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A MODERN TELEMACHUS



A MODERN TELEMACHUS

BY

CHARLOTTE M. YONGE

AUTHOR OF 'THE HEIR OF REDCLYFFE,' 'UNKNOWN TO HISTORY,' ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

London

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P R E F A C E

THE idea of this tale was taken from *The Mariners' Chronicle*, compiled by a person named Scott early in the last century—a curious book of narratives of maritime adventures, with exceedingly quaint illustrations. Nothing has ever shown me more plainly that truth is stranger than fiction, for all that is most improbable here is the actual fact.

The Comte de Bourke was really an Irish Jacobite, naturalised in France, and married to the daughter of the Marquis de Varennes, as well as in high favour with the Marshal Duke of Berwick.

In 1719, just when the ambition of Elizabeth Farnese, the second wife of

Philip V. of Spain, had involved that country in a war with England, France, and Austria, the Count was transferred from the Spanish Embassy to that of Sweden, and sent for his wife and two elder children to join him at a Spanish port.

This arrangement was so strange that I can only account for it by supposing that as this was the date of a feeble Spanish attempt on behalf of the Jacobites in Scotland, Comte de Bourke may not have ventured by the direct route. Or it may not have been etiquette for him to re-enter France when appointed ambassador. At any rate, the poor Countess did take this route to the South, and I am inclined to think the narrative must be correct, as all the side-lights I have been able to gain perfectly agree with it, often in an unexpected manner.

The suite and the baggage were just as related in the story—the only liberty I have taken being the bestowal of names.

‘M. Arture’ was really of the party, but I have made him Scotch instead of Irish, and I have no knowledge that the lackey was not French. The imbecility of the Abbé is merely a deduction from his helplessness, but of course this may have been caused by illness.

The meeting with M. de Varennes at Avignon, Berwick’s offer of an escort, and the Countess’s dread of the Pyrenees, are all facts, as well as her embarkation in the Genoese tartane bound for Barcelona, and its capture by the Algerine corsair commanded by a Dutch renegade, who treated her well, and to whom she gave her watch.

Algerine history confirms what is said of his treatment. Louis XIV. had bombarded the pirate city, and compelled the Dey to receive a consul and to liberate French prisoners and French property ; but the lady having been taken in an Italian ship, the Dutchman was afraid to set her ashore without first taking her to Algiers, lest he

should fall under suspicion. He would not venture on taking so many women on board his own vessel, being evidently afraid of his crew of more than two hundred Turks and Moors, but sent seven men on board the prize and took it in tow.

Curiously enough, history mentions the very tempest which drove the tartane apart from her captor; for it also shattered the French transports and interfered with Berwick's Spanish campaign.

The circumstances of the wreck have been closely followed. 'M. Arture' actually saved Mademoiselle de Bourke, and placed her in the arms of the *maître d'hôtel*, who had reached a rock, together with the Abbé, the lackey, and one out of the four maids. The other three were all in the cabin with their mistress and her son, and shared their fate.

The real 'Arture' tried to swim to the shore, but never was seen again, so that his adventures with the little boy are wholly

imaginary. But the little girl's conduct is perfectly true. When in the steward's arms she declared that the savages might take her life, but never should make her deny her faith.

The account of these captors was a great difficulty, till in the old *Universal History* I found a description of Algeria which tallied wonderfully with the narrative. It was taken from a survey of the coast made a few years later by English officials.

The tribe inhabiting Mounts Araz and Couco, and bordering on Djigheli Bay, were really wild Arabs, claiming high descent, but very loose Mohammedans, and savage in their habits. Their name of Cabeleyzes is said—with what truth I know not—to mean 'revolted,' and they held themselves independent of the Dey. They were in the habit of murdering or enslaving all shipwrecked travellers, except subjects of Algiers, whom they released with nothing but their lives.

All this perfectly explains the sufferings of Mademoiselle de Bourke. The history of the plundering, the threats, the savage treatment of the corpses, the wild dogs, the councils of the tribe, the separation of the captives, and the child's heroism, is all literally true—the expedient of Victorine's defence alone being an invention. It is also true that the little girl and the *maître d'hôtel* wrote four letters, and sent them by different chances to Algiers, but only the last ever arrived, and it created a great sensation.

M. Dessault is a real personage, and the kindness of the Dey and of the Moors was exactly as related, also the expedient of sending the Marabout of Bugia to negotiate.

Mr. Thomas Thompson was really the English Consul at the time, but his share in the matter is imaginary, as it depends on Arthur's adventures.

The account of the Marabout system comes from the *Universal History*, but

the arrival, the negotiations, and the desire of the sheyk to detain the young French lady for a wife to his son, are from the narrative. He really did claim to be an equal match for her, were she daughter of the King of France, since he was King of the Mountains.

The welcome at Algiers and the *Te Deum* in the Consul's chapel also are related in the book that serves me for authority. It adds that Mademoiselle de Bourke finally married a Marquis de B——, and lived much respected in Provence, dying shortly before the Revolution.

I will only mention further that a rescued Abyssinian slave named Fareek (happily not tongueless) was well known to me many years ago in the household of the late Warden Barter of Winchester College.

Since writing the above I have by the kindness of friends been enabled to discover Mr. Scott's authority, namely, a book en-

titled *Voyage pour la Redemption des captifs aux Royaumes d'Alger et de Tunis, fait en 1720 par les P.P. François Comelin, Philemon de la Motte, et Joseph Bernard, de l'Ordre de la Sainte Trinité, dit Mathurine.* This Order was established by Jean Matha for the ransom and rescue of prisoners in the hands of the Moors. A translation of the adventures of the Comtesse de Bourke and her daughter was published in the *Catholic World*, New York, July 1881. It exactly agrees with the narration in *The Mariners' Chronicle* except that, in the true spirit of the eighteenth century, Mr. Scott thought fit to suppress that these ecclesiastics were at Algiers at the time of the arrival of Mademoiselle de Bourke's letter, that they interested themselves actively on her behalf, and that they wrote the narrative from the lips of the *maître d'hôtel* (who indeed may clearly be traced throughout). It seems also that the gold cups were chalices, and that a complete set

of altar equipments fell a prey to the Cabeleyzes, whose name the good fathers endeavour to connect with *Cabale*—with about as much reason as if we endeavoured to derive that word from the ministry of Charles II.

Had I known in time of the assistance of these benevolent brethren I would certainly have introduced them with all due honour, but, like the Abbé Vertot, I have to say, *Mon histoire est écrite*, and what is worse—printed. Moreover, they do not seem to have gone on the mission with the Marabout from Bugia, so that their presence really only accounts for the *Te Deum* with which the redeemed captives were welcomed.

It does not seem quite certain whether M. Dessault was Consul or Envoy: I incline to think the latter. The translation in the *Catholic World* speaks of Sir Arthur, but Mr. Scott's 'M. Arture' is much more *vraisemblable*. He probably had either a

surname to be concealed or else unpronounceable to French lips. Scott must have had some further information of the after history of Mademoiselle de Bourke since he mentions her marriage, which could hardly have taken place when Père Comelin's book was published in 1720.

C. M. YONGE.

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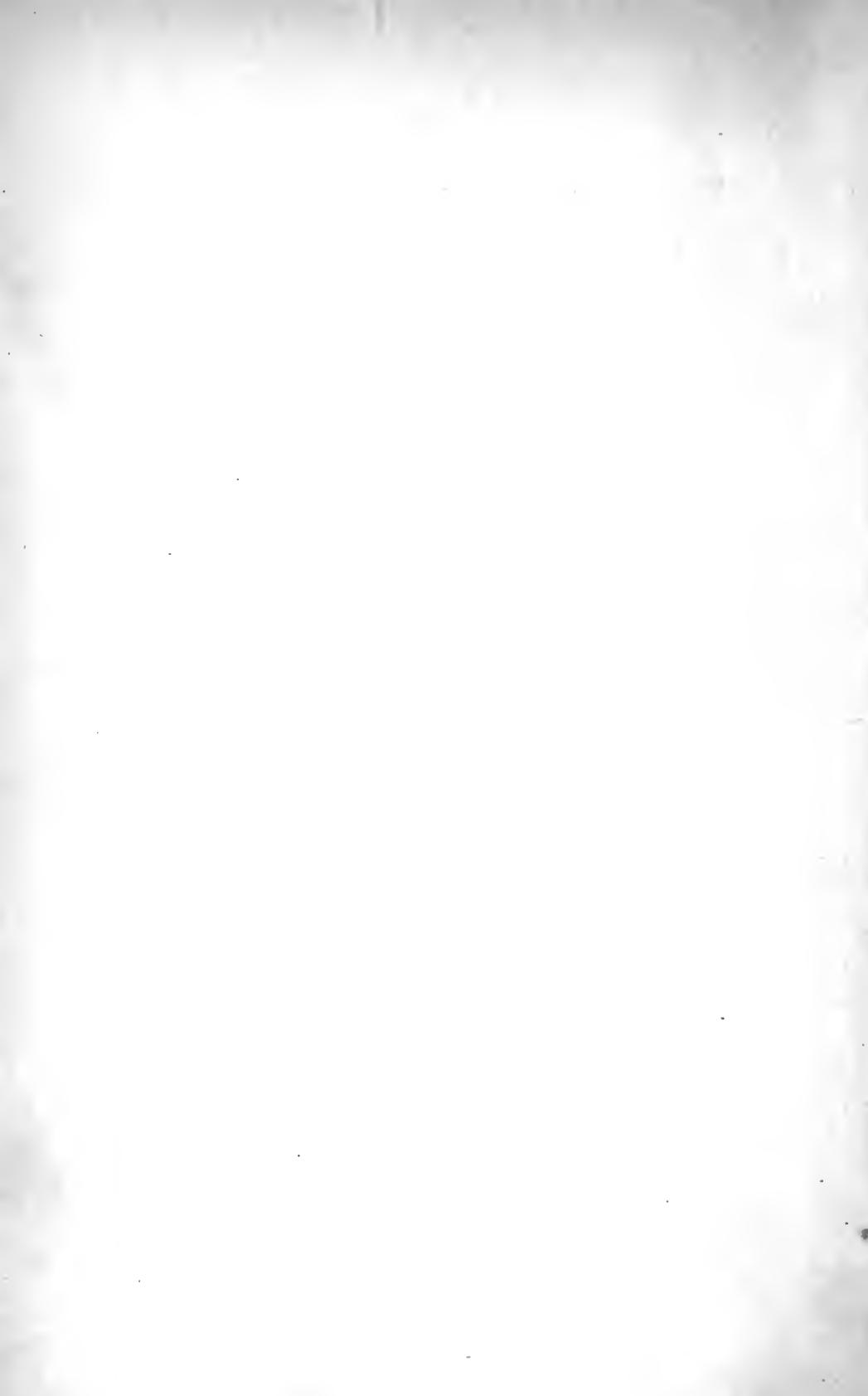
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CHAPTER I

COMPANIONS OF THE VOYAGE

‘ Make mention thereto
Touching my much loved father’s safe return,
If of his whereabouts I may best hear.’

Odyssey (MUSGRAVE).

‘ OH ! brother, I wish they had named
you Télémaque, and then it would have
been all right ! ’

‘ Why so, sister ? Why should I be
called by so ugly a name ? I like Ulysses
much better ; and it is also the name of
my papa.’

‘ That is the very thing. His name is
Ulysses, and we are going to seek for him.’

‘Oh ! I hope that cruel old Mentor is not coming to tumble us down over a great rock, like Télémaque in the picture.’

‘ You mean Père le Brun ?’

‘ Yes ; you know he always says he is our Mentor ! And I wish he would change into a goddess with a helmet and a shield, with an ugly face, and go off in a cloud. Do you think he will, Estelle ?’

‘ Do not be so silly, Ulick ; there are no goddesses now.’

‘ I heard M. de la Mède tell that pretty lady with the diamond butterfly that she was his goddess ; so there are !’

‘ You do not understand, brother. That was only flattery and compliment. Goddesses were only in the Greek mythology, and were all over long ago !’

‘But are we really going to see our papa?’

‘Oh yes, mamma told me so. He is made Ambassador to Sweden, you know.’

‘Is that greater than Envoy to Spain?’

‘Very, very much greater. They call mamma Madame l’Ambassadrice ; and she is having three complete new dresses made. See, there are *la bonne* and Laurent talking. It is English, and if we go near with our cups and balls we shall hear all about it. Laurent always knows, because my uncle tells him.’

‘You must call him *La Jeunesse* now he is made mamma’s lackey. Is he not beautiful in his new livery?’

‘Be still now, brother ; I want to hear what they are saying.’

This may sound somewhat sly, but French children, before Rousseau had made them the fashion, were kept in the background, and were reduced to picking up intelligence as best they could without any sense of its being dishonourable to do so ; and, indeed, it was more neglect than desire of concealment that left them uninformed.

This was in 1719, four years after the accession of Louis XV., a puny infant, to the French throne, and in the midst of the Regency of the Duke of Orleans. The scene was a broad walk in the Tuileries gardens, beneath a closely-clipped wall of greenery, along which were disposed alternately busts upon pedestals, and stone vases of flowers,

while beyond lay formal beds of flowers, the gravel walks between radiating from a fountain, at present quiescent, for it was only ten o'clock in the forenoon, and the gardens were chiefly frequented at that hour by children and their attendants, who, like Estelle and Ulysse de Bourke, were taking an early walk on their way home from mass.

They were a miniature lady and gentleman of the period in costume, with the single exception that, in consideration of their being only nine and seven years old, their hair was free from powder. Estelle's light, almost flaxen, locks were brushed back from her forehead, and tied behind with a rose-coloured ribbon, but uncovered, except by a tiny lace cap on the crown of her head ;

Ulick's darker hair was carefully arranged in great curls on his back and shoulders, as like a full-bottomed wig as nature would permit, and over it he wore a little cocked hat edged with gold lace. He had a rich laced cravat, a double-breasted waistcoat of pale blue satin, and breeches to match, a brown velvet coat with blue embroidery on the pockets, collar, and skirts, silk stockings to match, as well as the knot of the tiny scabbard of the semblance of a sword at his side, shoes with silver buckles, and altogether he might have been a full-grown Comte or Vicomte seen through a diminishing glass. His sister was in a full-hooped dress, with tight long waist, and sleeves reaching to her elbows, the under skirt a pale pink, the upper a

deeper rose colour; but stiff as was the attire, she had managed to give it a slight general air of disarrangement, to get her cap a little on one side, a stray curl loose on her forehead, to tear a bit of the dangling lace on her arms, and to splash her robe with a puddle. He was in air, feature, and complexion a perfect little dark Frenchman. The contour of her face, still more its rosy glow, were more in accordance with her surname, and so especially were the large deep blue eyes with the long dark lashes and pencilled brows. And there was a lively restless air about her full of intelligence, as she manœuvred her brother towards a stone seat, guarded by a couple of cupids reining in sleepy-looking lions in

stone, where, under the shade of a lime-tree, her little petticoated brother of two years old was asleep, cradled in the lap of a large, portly, handsome woman, in a dark dress, a white cap and apron, and dark crimson cloak, loosely put back, as it was an August day. Native costumes were then, as now, always worn by French nurses ; but this was not the garb of any province of the kingdom, and was as Irish as the brogue in which she was conversing with the tall fine young man who stood at ease beside her. He was in a magnificent green and gold livery suit, his hair powdered, and fastened in a *queue*, the whiteness contrasting with the dark brows, and the eyes and complexion of that fine Irish type that it

is the fashion to call Milesian. He looked proud of his dress, which was viewed in those days as eminently becoming, and did in fact display his well-made figure and limbs to great advantage; but he looked anxiously about, and his first inquiry on coming on the scene in attendance upon the little boy had been—

‘The top of the morning to ye, mother !
And where is Victorine ?’

‘Arrah, and what would ye want with Victorine ?’ demanded the *bonne*. ‘Is not the old mother enough for one while, to feast her eyes on her an’ Lanty Callaghan, now he has shed the *marmiton’s* slough, and come out in old Ireland’s colours, like a butterfly from a

palmer? La Jeunesse, instead of Laurent here, and Laurent there.'

La Pierre and La Jeunesse were the stereotyped names of all pairs of lackeys in French noble houses, and the title was a mark of promotion; but Lanty winced and said, 'Have done with that, mother. You know that never the pot nor the kettle has blacked my fingers since Master Phelim went to the good fathers' school with me to carry his books and insinse him with the larning. 'Tis all one, as his own body-servant that I have been, as was fitting for his own foster-brother, till now, when not one of the servants, barring myself and Maître Hébert, the steward, will follow Madame la Comtesse beyond the four

walls of Paris. “Will you desert us too, Laurent?” says the lady. “And is it me you mane, Madame,” says I, “Sorrah a Callaghan ever deserted a Burke!” “Then,” says she, “if you will go with us to Sweden, you shall have two lackey’s suits, and a couple of *louis d’or* to cross your pocket with by the year, forbye the fee and bounty of all the visitors to M. le Comte.” “Is it M. l’Abbé goes with Madame?” says I. “And why not,” says she. “Then,” says I, “’tis myself that is mightily obliged to your ladyship, and am ready to put on her colours and do all in reason in her service, so as I am free to attend to Master Phelim, that is M. l’Abbé, whenever he needs me, that am

in duty bound as his own foster-brother.” “Ah, Laurent,” says she, “’tis you that are the faithful domestic. We shall all stand in need of such good offices as we can do to one another, for we shall have a long and troublesome, if not dangerous journey, both before and after we have met M. le Comte.”

Estelle here nodded her head with a certain satisfaction, while the nurse replied—

‘And what other answer could the son of your father make—Heavens be his bed—that was shot through the head by the masther’s side in the weary wars in Spain? and whom could ye be bound to serve barring Master Phelim, that’s lain in the same cradle with yees—’

‘Is not Victorine here, mother?’ still restlessly demanded Lanty.

‘Never you heed Victorine,’ replied she. ‘Sure she may have a little arrand of her own, and ye might have a word for the old mother that never parted with you before.’

‘You not going, mother?’ he exclaimed.

‘ ’Tis my heart that will go with you and Masther Phelim, my jewel; but Madame la Comtesse will have it that this weeny little darlint’—caressing the child in her lap—‘could never bear the cold of that bare and dissolute place in the north you are bound for, and old Madame la Marquise, her mother, would be mad entirely if all the children left

her ; but our own lady can't quit the little one without leaving his own nurse Honor with him !'

' That's news to me intirely, mother,' said Lanty ; ' bad luck to it ! '

Honor laughed that half-proud, half-sad laugh of mothers when their sons outgrow them. ' Fine talking ! Much he cares for the old mother if he can see the young girl go with him.'

For Lanty's eyes had brightened at sight of a slight little figure, trim to the last degree, with a jaunty little cap on her dark hair, gay trimmings to the black apron, dainty shoes and stockings that came tripping down the path. His tongue instantly changed to French from what he called English, as in pathetic

insinuating modulations he demanded how she could be making him weary his very heart out.

‘Who bade you?’ she retorted. ‘I never asked you to waste your time here !’

‘And will ye not give me a glance of the eyes that have made a cinder of my poor heart, when I am going away into the desolate north, among the bears and the savages and the heretics ?’

‘There will be plenty of eyes there to look at your fine green and gold, for the sake of the Paris cut ; though a great lumbering fellow like you does not know how to show it off !’

‘And if I bring back a heretic *bru* to break the heart of the mother, will

it not be all the fault of the cruelty of Mademoiselle Victorine ?'

Here Estelle, unable to withstand Lanty's piteous intonations, broke in, 'Never mind, Laurent, Victorine goes with us. She went to be measured for a new pair of shoes on purpose !'

'Ah ! I thought I should disembarass myself of a great troublesome Irishman !'

'No !' retorted the boy, 'you knew Laurent was going, for Maître Hébert had just come in to say he must have a lackey's suit !'

'Yes,' said Estelle, 'that was when you took me in your arms and kissed me, and said you would follow Madame la Comtesse to the end of the world.'

The old nurse laughed heartily, but

Victorine cried out, ‘Does Mademoiselle think I am going to follow naughty little girls who invent follies? It is still free to me to change my mind. Poor Simon Claquette is gnawing his heart out, and he is to be left *concierge*!’

The clock at the palace chimed eleven, Estelle took her brother’s hand, Honor rose with little Jacques in her arms, Victorine paced beside her, and Lanty as La Jeunesse followed, puffing out his breast, and wielding his cane, as they all went home to *déjeuner*.

Twenty-nine years before the opening of this narrative, just after the battle of Boyne Water had ruined the hopes of the Stewarts in Ireland, Sir Ulick Burke had attended James II. in his flight from

Waterford ; and his wife had followed him, attended by her two faithful servants, Patrick Callaghan, and his wife Honor, carrying her mistress's child on her bosom, and her own on her back.

Sir Ulick, or Le Chevalier Bourke, as the French called him, had no scruple in taking service in the armies of Louis XIV. Callaghan followed him everywhere, while Honor remained a devoted attendant on her lady, doubly bound to her by exile and sorrow.

Little Ulick Burke's foster-sister died, perhaps because she had always been made second to him through all the hardships and exposure of the journey. Other babes of both lady and nurse had succumbed to the mortality which beset the children of

that generation, and the only survivors besides the eldest Burke and one daughter were the two youngest of each mother, and they had arrived so nearly at the same time that Honor Callaghan could again be foster-mother to Phelim Burke, a sickly child, reared with great difficulty.

The family were becoming almost French. Sir Ulick was an intimate friend of one of the noblest men of the day, James Fitz-James, Marshal Duke of Berwick, who united military talent, almost equal to that of his uncle of Marlborough, to an unswerving honour and integrity very rare in those evil times. Under him, Sir Ulick fought in the campaigns that finally established the House of Bourbon upon the throne of Spain, and the younger Ulick or

Ulysse, as his name had been classicalised and Frenchified, was making his first campaign as a mere boy at the time of the battle of Almanza, that solitary British defeat, for which our national consolation is that the French were commanded by an Englishman, the Duke of Berwick, and the English by a Frenchman, the Huguenot Rubigné, Earl of Galway. The first English charge was, however, fatal to the Chevalier Bourke, who fell mortally wounded, and in the endeavour to carry him off the field, the faithful Callaghan likewise fell. Sir Ulick lived long enough to be visited by the Duke, and to commend his children to his friend's protection.

Berwick was held to be dry and stiff, but he was a faithful friend, and well re-

deemed his promise. The eldest son, young as he was, obtained as wife the daughter of the Marquis de Varennes, and soon distinguished himself both in war and policy, so as to receive the title of Comte de Bourke.

The French Church was called on to provide for the other two children. The daughter, Alice, became a nun in one of the Parisian convents, with promises of promotion. The younger son, Phelim, was weakly in health, and of intellect feeble, if not deficient, and was almost dependent on the devoted care and tenderness of his foster-brother, Laurence Callaghan. Nobody was startled when Berwick's interest procured for the dull boy of ten years old the Abbey of St. Eudoce in Champagne. To be sure the responsibilities were not great, for the

Abbey had been burnt down a century and a half ago by the Huguenots, and there had never been any monks in it since, so the only effect was that little Phelim Burke went by the imposing title of Monsieur l'Abbé de St. Eudoce, and his family enjoyed as much of the revenues of the estates of the Abbey as the Intendant thought proper to transmit to them. He was, to a certain degree, ecclesiastically educated, having just memory enough to retain for recitation the tasks that Lanty helped him to learn, and he could copy the themes or translations made for him by his faithful companion. Neither boy had the least notion of unfairness or deception in this arrangement: it was only the natural service of the one to the other, and if it

were perceived in the Fathers of the Seminary, whither Lanty daily conducted the young Abbot, they winked at it. Nor, though the quick-witted Lanty thus acquired a considerable amount of learning, no idea occurred to him of availing himself of it for his own advantage. It sat outside him, as it were, for ‘Masther Phelim’s’ use ; and he no more thought of applying it to his own elevation than he did of wearing the *soutane* he brushed for his young master.

The Abbé was now five-and-twenty, had received the tonsure, and had been admitted to minor Orders, but there was no necessity for him to proceed any farther unless higher promotion should be accorded to him in recompense of his brother’s ser-

vices. He was a gentle, amiable being, not at all fit to take care of himself; and since the death of his mother, he had been the charge of his brother and sister-in-law, or perhaps more correctly speaking, of the Dowager Marquise de Varennes, for all the branches of the family lived together in the Hôtel de Varennes at Paris, or its château in the country, and the fine old lady ruled over all, her son and son-in-law being often absent, as was the case at present.

A fresh European war had been provoked by the ambition of the second wife of Philip V. of Spain, the Prince for whose cause Berwick had fought. This Queen, Elizabeth Farnese, wanted rank and dominion for her own son; moreover, Philip looked with longing eyes at his native

kingdom of France, all claim to which he had resigned when Spain was bequeathed to him ; but now that only a sickly child, Louis XV., stood between him and the succession in right of blood, he felt his rights superior to those of the Duke of Orleans. Thus Spain was induced to become hostile to France, and to commence the war known as that of the Quadruple Alliance.

While there was still hope of accommodation, the Comte de Bourke had been sent as a special envoy to Madrid, and there continued even after the war had broken out, and the Duke of Berwick, resigning all the estates he had received from the gratitude of Philip V., had led an army across the frontier.

The Count had, however, just been appointed Ambassador to Sweden, and was anxious to be joined by his family on the way thither.

The tidings had created great commotion. Madame de Varennes looked on Sweden as an Ultima Thule of frost and snow, but knew that a lady's presence was essential to the display required of an ambassador. She strove, however, to have the children left with her; but her daughter declared that she could not part with Estelle, who was already a companion and friend, and that Ulysse must be with his father, who longed for his eldest son, so that only little Jacques, a delicate child, was to be left to console his grandmother.

CHAPTER II.

A JACOBITE WAIF

‘Sae now he’s o’er the floods sae gray,
And Lord Maxwell has ta’en his good-night.’

LORD MAXWELL’S *Good-night.*

MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOURKE was by no means a helpless fine lady. She had several times accompanied her husband on his expeditions, and had only not gone with him to Madrid because he did not expect to be long absent, and she sorely rued the separation.

She was very busy in her own room, superintending the packing, and assisting in it, when her own clever fingers were

more effective than those of her maids. She was in her *robe de chambre*, a dark blue wrapper, embroidered with white, and put on more neatly than was always the case with French ladies in *déshabille*. The hoop, long stiff stays, rich brocade robe, and fabric of powdered hair were equally unsuitable to ease or exertion, and consequently were seldom assumed till late in the day, when the toilette was often made in public.

So Madame de Bourke's hair was simply rolled out of her way, and she appeared in her true colours, as a little brisk, bonny woman, with no actual beauty, but very expressive light gray eyes, furnished with intensely long black lashes, and a sweet, mobile, lively countenance.

Estelle was trying to amuse little Jacques, and prevent him from trotting between the boxes, putting all sorts of undesirable goods into them ; and Ulysse had collected his toys, and was pleading earnestly that a headless wooden horse and a kite, twice as tall as himself, of Lanty's manufacture, might go with them.

He was told that another *cerf-volant* should be made for him at the journey's end ; but was only partially consoled, and his mother was fain to compound for a box of woolly lambs. Estelle winked away a tear when her doll was rejected, a wooden, highly painted lady, bedizened in brocade, and so dear to her soul that it was hard to be told that

she was too old for such toys, and that the Swedes would be shocked to see the Ambassador's daughter embracing a doll. She had, however, to preserve her character of a reasonable child, and tried to derive consolation from the permission to bestow 'Mademoiselle' upon the *concierge's* little sick daughter, who would be sure to cherish her duly.

'But, oh mamma, I pray you to let me take my book !'

'Assuredly, my child. Let us see ! What ? Télémaque ? Not "Prince Perinet and Princess Gracieuse ?"'

'I am tired of them, mamma.'

'Nor Madame d'Aulnoy's Fairy Tales ?'

'Oh no, thank you, mamma ; I love nothing so well as Télémaque.'

‘Thou art a droll child !’ said her mother.

‘Ah, but we are going to be like Télémaque.’

‘Heaven forfend !’ said the poor lady.

‘Yes, dear mamma, I am glad you are going with us instead of staying at home to weave and unweave webs. If Penelope had been like *you*, she would have gone !’

‘Take care, is not Jacques acting Penelope ?’ said Madame de Bourke, unable to help smiling at her little daughter’s glib mythology, while going to the rescue of the embroidery silks, in which her youngest son was entangling himself.

At that moment there was a knock at

the door, and a message was brought that the Countess of Nithsdale begged the favour of a few minutes' conversation in private with Madame. The Scottish title fared better on the lips of La Jeunesse than it would have done on those of his predecessor. There was considerable intimacy among all the Jacobite exiles in and about Paris; and Winifred, Countess of Nithsdale, though living a very quiet and secluded life, was held in high estimation among all who recollect the act of wifely heroism by which she had rescued her husband from the block.

Madame de Bourke bade the maids carry off the little Jacques, and Ulysse followed; but Estelle, who had often listened with rapt attention to the story

of the escape, and longed to feast her eyes on the heroine, remained in her corner, usefully employed in disentangling the embroilment of silks, and with the illustrations to her beloved *Télémaque* as a resource in case the conversation should be tedious. Children who have hundreds of picture-books to rustle through can little guess how their predecessors could once dream over one.

Estelle made her low reverence unnoticed, and watched with eager eyes as the slight figure entered, clad in the stately costume that was regarded as proper respect to her hostess; but the long loose sacque of blue silk was faded, the *feuille-mort* velvet petticoat frayed, the lace on the neck and sleeves washed

and mended ; there were no jewels on the sleeves, though the long gloves fitted exquisitely, no gems in the buckles of the high-heeled shoes, and the only ornament in the carefully rolled and powdered hair, a white rose. Her face was thin and worn, with pleasant brown eyes. Estelle could not think her as beautiful as Calypso inconsolable for Ulysses, or Antiope receiving the boar's head. 'I know she is better than either,' thought the little maid ; 'but I wish she was more like Minerva.'

The Countesses met with the lowest of curtseys, and apologies on the one side for intrusion, on the other for *déshabille*, so they concluded with an embrace really affectionate, though consideration for

powder made it necessarily somewhat theatrical in appearance.

These were the stiffest of days, just before formality had become unbearable, and the reaction of simplicity had set in; and Estelle had undone two desperate knots in the green and yellow silks before the preliminary compliments were over, and Lady Nithsdale arrived at the point.

‘Madame is about to rejoin *Monsieur son Mari*.’

‘I am about to have that happiness.’

‘That is the reason I have been bold enough to derange her.’

‘Do not mention it. It is always a delight to see *Madame la Comtesse*.’

‘Ah! what will Madame say when

she hears that it is to ask a great favour of her.'

'Madame may reckon on me for whatever she would command.'

'If you can grant it—oh! Madame,' cried the Scottish Countess, beginning to drop her formality in her eagerness, 'we shall be for ever beholden to you, and you will make a wounded heart to sing, besides perhaps saving a noble young spirit.'

'Madame makes me impatient to hear what she would have of me,' said the French Countess, becoming a little on her guard, as the wife of a diplomatist, recollecting, too, that peace with George I. might mean war with the Jacobites.

'I know not whether a young kins-

man of my Lord's has ever been presented to Madame. His name is Arthur Maxwell Hope; but we call him usually by his Christian name.'

‘A tall, dark, handsome youth, almost like a Spaniard, or a picture by Van-dyke? It seems to me that I have seen him with M. le Comte.’ (Madame de Bourke could not venture on such a word as Nithsdale.)

‘Madame is right. The mother of the boy is a Maxwell, a cousin not far removed from my Lord, but he could not hinder her from being given in marriage as second wife to Sir David Hope, already an old man. He was good to her, but when he died, the sons by the first wife were harsh and unkind

to her and to her son, of whom they had always been jealous. The eldest was a creature of my Lord Stair, and altogether a Whig; indeed, he now holds an office at the Court of the Elector of Hanover, and has been created one of *his* peers.' (The scorn with which the gentle Winifred uttered those words was worth seeing, and the other noble lady gave a little derisive laugh.) 'These half-brothers declared that Lady Hope was nurturing the young Arthur in Toryism and disaffection, and they made it a plea for separating him from her, and sending him to an old minister, who kept a school, and who was very severe and even cruel to the poor boy. But I am wearying Madame.'

‘Oh no, I listen with the deepest interest.’

‘Finally, when the King was expected in Scotland, and men’s minds were full of anger and bitterness, as well as hope and spirit, the boy—he was then only fourteen years of age—boasted of his grandfather’s having fought at Killiecrankie, and used language which the tutor pronounced treasonable. He was punished and confined to his room; but in the night he made his escape and joined the royal army. My husband was grieved to see him, told him he had no right to political opinions, and tried to send him home in time to make his peace before all was lost. Alas! no. The little fellow did, indeed, pass

out safely from Preston, but only to join my Lord Mar. He was among the gentlemen who embarked at Banff; and when my Lord, by Heaven's mercy, had escaped from the Tower of London, and we arrived at Paris, almost the first person we saw was little Arthur, whom we thought to have been safe at home. We have kept him with us, and I contrived to let his mother know that he is living, for she had mourned him as among the slain.'

‘Poor mother.’

‘You may well pity her, Madame. She writes to me that if Arthur had returned at once from Preston, as my Lord advised, all would have been passed over as a schoolboy frolic; and, indeed,

he has never been attainted ; but there is nothing that his eldest brother, Lord Burnside as they call him, dreads so much as that it should be known that one of his family was engaged in the campaign, or that he is keeping such ill company as we are. Therefore, at her request, we have never called him Hope, but let him go by our name of Maxwell, which is his by baptism ; and now she tells me that if he could make his way to Scotland, not as if coming from Paris or Bar-le-Duc, but merely as if travelling on the Continent, his brother would consent to his return.'

‘Would she be willing that he should live under the usurper ?’

‘Madame, to tell you the truth,’ said

Lady Nithsdale, ‘the Lady Hope is not one to heed the question of usurpers, so long as her son is safe and a good lad. Nay, for my part, we all lived peaceably and happily enough under Queen Anne; and by all I hear, so they still do at home under the Elector of Hanover.’

‘The Regent has acknowledged him,’ put in the French lady.

‘Well,’ said the poor exile, ‘I know my Lord felt that it was his duty to obey the summons of his lawful sovereign, and that, as he said when he took up arms, one can only do one’s duty and take the consequences; but oh! when I look at the misery and desolation that has come of it, when I think of the

wives not so happy as I am, when I see my dear Lord wearing out his life in banishment, and think of our dear home and our poor people, I am tempted to wonder whether it were indeed a duty, or whether there were any right to call on brave men without a more steadfast purpose not to abandon them !'

‘ It would have been very different if the Duke of Berwick had led the way,’ observed Madame de Bourke. ‘ Then my husband would have gone, but, being French subjects, honour stayed both him and the Duke as long as the Regent made no move.’ The good lady, of course, thought that the Marshal Duke and her own Count must secure victory : but Lady Nithsdale was intent on her

own branch of the subject, and did not pursue ‘what might have been.’

‘After all,’ she said, ‘poor Arthur, at fourteen, could have no true political convictions. He merely fled because he was harshly treated, heard his grandfather branded as a traitor, and had an enthusiasm for my husband, who had been kind to him. It was a mere boy’s escapade, and if he had returned home when my Lord bade him, it would only have been remembered as such. He knows it now, and I frankly tell you, Madame, that what he has seen of our exiled court has not increased his ardour in the cause.’

‘Alas, no,’ said Madame de Bourke. ‘If the Chevalier de St. George were

other than he is, it would be easier to act in his behalf.'

'And you agree with me, Madame,' continued the visitor, 'that nothing can be worse or more hopeless for a youth than the life to which we are constrained here, with our whole shadow of hope in intrigue; and for our men, no occupation worthy of their sex. We women are not so ill off, with our children and domestic affairs; but it breaks my heart to see brave gentlemen's lives thus wasted. We have done our best for Arthur. He has studied with one of our good clergy, and my Lord himself has taught him to fence; but we cannot treat him any longer as a boy, and I know not what is to be his future,

unless we can return him to his own country.'

'Our army,' suggested Madame de Bourke.

'Ah! but he is Protestant.'

'A heretic!' exclaimed the lady, drawing herself up. 'But——'

'Oh, do not refuse me on that account. He is a good lad, and has lived enough among Catholics to keep his opinions in the background. But you understand that it is another reason for wishing to convey him, if not to Scotland, to some land like Sweden or Prussia, where his faith would not be a bar to his promotion.'

'What is it you would have me do?' said Madame de Bourke, more coldly.

‘If Madame would permit him to be included in her passport, as about to join the Ambassador’s suite, and thus conduct him to Sweden; Lady Hope would find means to communicate with him from thence, the poor young man would be saved from a ruined career, and the heart of the widow and mother would bless you for ever.’

Madame de Bourke was touched, but she was a prudent woman, and paused to ask whether the youth had shown any tendency to run into temptation, from which Lady Nithsdale wished to remove him.

‘Oh no,’ she answered; ‘he was a perfectly good docile lad, though high-spirited, submissive to the Earl, and a

kind playfellow to her little girls; it was his very excellence that made it so unfortunate that he should thus be stranded in early youth in consequence of one boyish folly.'

The Countess began to yield. She thought he might go as a secretary to her Lord, and she owned that if he was a brave young man, he would be an addition to her little escort, which only numbered two men besides her brother-in-law, the Abbé, who was of almost as little account as his young nephew. 'But I should warn you, Madame,' added Madame de Bourke, 'that it may be a very dangerous journey. I own to you, though I would not tell my poor mother, that my heart fails me when I think of

it, and were it not for the express commands of their father, I would not risk my poor children on it.'

'I do not think you will find Sweden otherwise than a cheerful and pleasant abode,' said Lady Nithsdale.

'Ah! if we were only in Sweden, or with my husband, all would be well!' replied the other lady; 'but we have to pass through the mountains, and the Catalans are always ill-affected to us French.'

'Nay; but you are a party of women, and belong to an ambassador!' was the answer.

'What do those robbers care for that? We are all the better prey for them! I have heard histories of Spanish

cruelty and lawlessness that would make you shudder! You cannot guess at the dreadful presentiments that have haunted me ever since I had my husband's letter.'

'There is danger everywhere, dear friend,' said Lady Nithsdale kindly; 'but God finds a way for us through all.'

'Ah! you have experienced it,' said Madame de Bourke. 'Let us proceed to the affairs. I only thought I should tell you the truth.'

Lady Nithsdale answered for the courage of her protégé, and it was further determined that he should be presented to her that evening by the Earl, at the farewell reception which Madame de Varennes was to hold on her daughter's behalf, when it could be

determined in what capacity he should be named in the passport.

Estelle, who had been listening with all her ears, and trying to find a character in Fénelon's romance to be represented by Arthur Hope, now further heard it explained that the party were to go southward to meet her father at one of the Mediterranean ports, as the English Government were so suspicious of Jacobites that he did not venture on taking the direct route by sea, but meant to travel through Germany. Madame de Bourke expected to meet her brother at Avignon, and to obtain his advice as to her further route.

Estella heard this with great satisfaction.

‘ We shall go to the Mediterranean Sea and

be in danger,' she said to herself, unfolding the map at the beginning of her *Télémaque* ; ' that is quite right ! Perhaps we shall see Calypso's island.'

She begged hard to be allowed to sit up that evening to see the hero of the escape from the Tower of London, as well as the travelling companion destined for her, and she prevailed, for mamma pronounced that she had been very sage and reasonable all day, and the grandmamma, who was so soon to part with her, could refuse her nothing. So she was full dressed, with hair curled, and permitted to stand by the tall high-backed chair where the old lady sat to receive her visitors.

The Marquise de Varennes was a small withered woman, with keen eyes, and a sort

of sparkle of manner, and power of setting people at ease, that made her the more charming the older she grew. An experienced eye could detect that she retained the costume of the prime of Louis XIV., when headdresses were less high than that which her daughter was obliged to wear. For the two last mortal hours of that busy day had poor Madame de Bourke been compelled to sit under the hands of the hairdresser, who was building up, with paste and powder and the like, an original conception of his, namely, a northern landscape, with snow-laden trees, drifts of snow, diamond icicles, and even a cottage beside an ice-bound stream. She could ill spare the time, and longed to be excused; but the artist had begged so hard to be allowed to carry out

his brilliant and unique idea, this last time of attending on Madame l'Ambassadrice, that there was no resisting him, and perhaps her strange forebodings made her less willing to inflict a disappointment on the poor man. It would have been strange to contrast the fabric of vanity building up outside her head, with the melancholy bodings within it, as she sat motionless under the hairdresser's fingers ; but at the end she roused herself to smile gratefully, and give the admiration that was felt to be due to the monstrosity that crowned her. Forbearance and Christian patience may be exercised even on a toilette à la Louis XV. Long practice enabled her to walk about, seat herself, rise and curtsey without detriment to the edifice, or bestowing the powder either

on her neighbours or on the richly-flowered white brocade she wore ; while she received the compliments, one after another, of ladies in even more gorgeous array, and gentlemen in velvet coats, adorned with gold lace, cravats of exquisite fabric, and diamond shoe buckles.

Phelim Burke, otherwise l'Abbé de St. Eudoce, stood near her. He was a thin, yellow, and freckled youth, with sandy hair and typical Irish features, but without their drollery, and his face was what might have been expected in a half-starved, half-clad gossoon in a cabin, rather than surmounting a silken *soutane* in a Parisian salon ; but he had a pleasant smile when kindly addressed by his friends.

Presently Lady Nithsdale drew near,

accompanied by a tall, grave gentleman, and bringing with them a still taller youth, with the stiffest of backs and the longest of legs, who, when presented, made a bow apparently from the end of his spine, like Estelle's lamented Dutch-jointed doll when made to sit down. Moreover, he was more shabbily dressed than any other gentleman present, with a general outgrown look about his coat, and darns in his silk stockings ; and though they were made by the hand of a Countess, that did not add to their elegance. And as he stood as stiff as a ramrod or as a sentinel, Estelle's good breeding was all called into play, and her mother's heart quailed as she said to herself, ‘ A great raw Scot ! What can be done with him ? ’

Lord Nithsdale spoke for him, thinking

he had better go as secretary, and showing some handwriting of good quality. ‘Did he know any languages?’ ‘French, English, Latin, and some Greek.’ ‘And, Madame,’ added Lord Nithsdale, ‘not only is his French much better than mine, as you would hear if the boy durst open his mouth, but our broad Scotch is so like Swedish that he will almost be an interpreter there.’

However hopeless Madame de Bourke felt, she smiled and professed herself rejoiced to hear it, and it was further decided that Arthur Maxwell Hope, aged eighteen, Scot by birth, should be mentioned among those of the Ambassador’s household for whom she demanded passports. Her position rendered this no matter of difficulty, and it was wiser to give the full truth to the

home authorities ; but as it was desirable that it should not be reported to the English Government that Lord Burnside's brother was in the suite of the Jacobite Comte de Bourke, he was only to be known to the public by his first name, which was not much harder to French lips than Maxwell or Hope.

‘Tall and black and awkward,’ said Estelle, describing him to her brother. ‘I shall not like him—I shall call him Phalante instead of Arthur.’

‘Arthur,’ said Ulysse ; ‘King Arthur was turned into a crow !’

‘Well, this Arthur is like a crow—a great black skinny crow with torn feathers.’

CHAPTER III

ON THE RHONE

‘Fairer scenes the opening eye
Of the day can scarce descry,
Fairer sight he looks not on
Than the pleasant banks of Rhone.’

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

LONG legs may be in the abstract an advantage, but scarcely so in what was called in France *une grande Berline*. This was the favourite travelling carriage of the eighteenth century, and consisted of a close carriage or coach proper, with arrangements on the top for luggage, and behind it another seat open, but

provided with a large leathern hood, and in front another place for the coachman and his companions. Each seat was wide enough to hold three persons, and thus within sat Madame de Bourke, her brother-in-law, the two children, Arthur Hope, and Mademoiselle Julienne, an elderly woman of the artisan class, *femme de chambre* to the Countess. Victorine, who was attendant on the children, would travel under the hood with two more maids ; and the front seat would be occupied by the coachman, Laurence Callaghan—otherwise La Jeunesse, and Maître Hébert, the *maître d'hôtel*. Fain would Arthur have shared their elevation, so far as ease and comfort of mind and body went, and the

Countess's wishes may have gone the same way ; but besides that it would have been an insult to class him with the servants, the horses of the home establishment, driven by their own coachman, took the party the first stage out of Paris ; and though afterwards the post-horses or mules, six in number, would be ridden by their own postilions, there was such an amount of luggage as to leave little or no space for a third person outside.

It had been a perfect sight to see the carriage packed ; when Arthur, convoyed by Lord Nithsdale, arrived in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Varennes. Madame de Bourke was taking with her all the paraphernalia of an ambas-

sador—a service of plate, in a huge chest stowed under the seat, a portrait of Philip V., in a gold frame set with diamonds, being included among her jewellery—and Lord Nithsdale, standing by, could not but drily remark, ‘Yonder is more than we brought with us, Arthur.’

The two walked up and down the court together, unwilling to intrude on the parting which, as they well knew, would be made in floods of tears. Sad enough indeed it was, for Madame de Varennes was advanced in years, and her daughter had not only to part with her, but with the baby Jacques, for an unknown space of time; but the self-command and restraint of grief for the sake of each other was absolutely un-

known. It was a point of honour and sentiment to weep as much as possible, and it would have been regarded as frigid and unnatural not to go on crying too much to eat or speak for a whole day beforehand, and at least two afterwards.

So when the travellers descended the steps to take their seats, each face was enveloped in a handkerchief, and there were passionate embraces, literal pressings to the breast, and violent sobs, as each victim, one after the other, ascended the carriage steps and fell back on the seat; while in the background, Honor Callaghan was uttering Irish wails over the Abbé and Laurence, and the lamentable sound set the little lap-dog and the big watchdog howling in chorus. Arthur Hope,

probably as miserable as any of them in parting with his friend and hero, was only standing like a stake, and an embarrassed stake (if that be possible), and Lord Nithsdale, though anxious for him, heartily pitying all, was nevertheless haunted by a queer recollection of Lance and his dog, and thinking that French dogs were not devoid of sympathy, and that the part of Crab was left for Arthur.

However, the last embrace was given, and the ladies were all packed in, while the Abbé, with his breast heaving with sobs, his big hat in one hand, and a huge silk pocket-handkerchief in the other, did not forget his manners, but waved to Arthur to ascend the steps first. ‘Secretary, not guest. You must re-

member that another time,' said Lord Nithsdale. 'God bless you, my dear lad, and bring you safe back to bonny Scotland, a true and leal heart.'

Arthur wrung his friend's hand once more, and disappeared into the vehicle ; Nurse Honor made one more rush, and uttered another 'Ohone' over Abbé Phelim, who followed into the carriage ; the door was shut ; there was a last wail over 'Lanty, the sunbeam of me heart,' as he climbed to the box seat ; the harness jingled ; coachman and postilions cracked their whips, the impatient horses dashed out at the *porte cochère* ; and Arthur, after endeavouring to dispose of his legs, looked about him, and saw, opposite to him, Madame de Bourke

lying back in the corner in a transport of grief, one arm round her daughter, and her little son lying across her lap, both sobbing and crying; and on one side of him the Abbé, sunk in his corner, his yellow silk handkerchief over his face; on the other, Mademoiselle Julienne, who was crying too, but with more moderation, perhaps more out of propriety or from infection than from actual grief: at any rate she had more of her senses about her than any one else, and managed to dispose of the various loose articles that had been thrown after the travellers, in pockets and under cushions. Arthur would have assisted, but only succeeded in treading on various toes and eliciting some small shrieks, which disconcerted

him all the more, and made Mademoiselle Julienne look daggers at him, as she relieved her lady of little Ulysse, lifting him to her own knee, where, as he was absolutely exhausted with crying, he fell asleep.

Arthur hoped the others would do the same, and perhaps there was more dozing than they would have confessed ; but whenever there was a movement, and some familiar object in the streets of Paris struck the eye of Madame, the Abbé, or Estelle, there was a little cry, and they went off on a fresh score.

‘Poor wretched weak creatures !’ he said to himself, as he thought over the traditions of Scottish heroic women on whose heroism he had gloated. And yet

he was wrong: Madame de Bourke was capable of as much resolute self-devotion as any of the ladies on the other side of the Channel, but tears were a tribute required by the times. So she gave way to them—just as no doubt the women of former days saw nothing absurd in bottling them.

Arthur's position among all these weeping figures was extremely awkward, all the more so that he carried his sword upright between his legs, not daring to disturb the lachrymose company enough to dispose of it in the sword case appropriated to weapons. He longed to take out the little pocket Virgil, which Lord Nithsdale had given him, so as to have some occupation for

his eyes, but he durst not, lest he should be thought rude, till, at a halt at a cabaret to water the horses, the striking of a clock reminded the Abbé that it was the time for reading the Hours, and when the breviary was taken out, Arthur thought his book might follow it.

By and by there was a halt at Corbeil, where was the nunnery of Alice Bourke, of whom her brother and sister-in-law were to take leave. They, with the children, were set down there, while Arthur went on with the carriage and servants to the inn to dine.

It was the first visit of Ulysse to the convent, and he was much amazed at peeping at his aunt's hooded face through a grating. However, the family

were admitted to dine in the refectory ; but poor Madame de Bourke was fit for nothing but to lie on a bed, attended affectionately by her sister-in-law, Sœur Ste. Madeleine.

‘ O sister, sister,’ was her cry, ‘ I must say it to you—I would not to my poor mother—that I have the most horrible presentiments I shall never see her again, nor my poor child. No, nor my husband ; I knew it when he took leave of me for that terrible Spain.’

‘ Yet you see he is safe, and you will be with him, sister,’ returned the nun.

‘ Ah ! that I knew I should ! But think of those fearful Pyrenees, and the bandits that infest them—and all the valuables we carry with us.’

‘Surely I heard that Marshal Berwick had offered you an escort.

‘That will only attract the attention of the brigands and bring them in greater force. O sister, sister, my heart sinks at the thought of my poor children in the hands of those savages ! I dream of them every night.’

‘The suite of an ambassador is sacred.’

‘Ah ! but what do they care for that, the robbers ? I know destruction lies that way !’

‘Nay, sister, this is not like you. You always were brave, and trusted Heaven, when you had to follow Ulick.’

‘Alas ! never had I this sinking of heart, which tells me I shall be torn from my poor children and never rejoin him.’

Sister Ste. Madeleine caressed and prayed with the poor lady, and did her utmost to reassure and comfort her, promising a *neuvaine* for her safe journey and meeting with her husband.

‘For the children,’ said the poor Countess. ‘I know I never shall see him more.’

However, the cheerfulness of the bright Irishwoman had done her some good, and she was better by the time she rose to pursue her journey. Estelle and Ulysse had been much petted by the nuns, and when all met again, to the great relief of Arthur, he found continuous weeping was not *de rigueur*. When they got in again, he was able to get rid of his sword, and only trod on two pair

of toes, and got his legs twice tumbled over.

Moreover, Madame de Bourke had recovered the faculty of making pretty speeches, and when the weapon was put into the sword case, she observed with a sad little smile, ‘Ah, Monsieur ! we look to you as our defender !’

‘And me too !’ cried little Ulysse, making a violent demonstration with his tiny blade, and so nearly poking out his uncle’s eye that the article was relegated to the same hiding-place as ‘Monsieur Arture’s,’ and the boy was assured that this was a proof of his manliness.

He had quite recovered his spirits, and as his mother and sister were still exhausted with weeping, he was not easy

to manage, till Arthur took heart of grace, and offering him a perch on his knee, let him look out at the window, explaining the objects on the way, which were all quite new to the little Parisian boy. Fortunately he spoke French well, with scarcely any foreign accent, and his answers to the little fellow's eager questions interspersed with observations on 'What they do in my country,' not only kept Ulysse occupied, but gained Estelle's attention, though she was too weary and languid, and perhaps, child as she was, too much bound by the requirements of sympathy to manifest her interest, otherwise than by moving near enough to listen.

That evening the party reached the

banks of one of the canals which connected the rivers of France, and which was to convey them to the Loire and thence to the Rhone, in a huge flat-bottomed barge, called a *coche d'eau*, a sort of ark, with cabins, where travellers could be fairly comfortable, space where the berlin could be stowed away in the rear, and a deck with an awning where the passengers could disport themselves. From the days of Sully to those of the Revolution, this was by far the most convenient and secure mode of transport, especially in the south of France. It was very convenient to the Bourke party, who were soon established on the deck. The lady's dress was better adapted to travelling than the full costume of Paris. It was what she called *en Amazone*—namely, a cloth

riding-habit faced with blue, with a short skirt, with open coat and waistcoat, like a man's, hair unpowdered and tied behind, and a large shady feathered hat. Estelle wore a miniature of the same, and rejoiced in her freedom from the whalebone stiffness of her Paris life, skipping about the deck with her brother, like fairies, Lanty said, or, as she preferred to make it, 'like a nymph.'

The water coach moved only by day, and was already arrived before the land one brought the weary party to the meeting-place—a picturesque water-side inn with a high roof, and a trellised passage down to the landing-place, covered by a vine, hung with clusters of ripe grapes.

Here the travellers supped on omelettes and *vin ordinaire*, and went off to bed—

Madame and her child in one bed, with the maids on the floor, and in another room the Abbé and secretary, each in a *grabat*, the two men-servants in like manner, on the floor. Such was the privacy of the eighteenth century, and Arthur, used to waiting on himself, looked on with wonder to see the Abbé like a baby in the hands of his faithful foster-brother, who talked away in a queer mixture of Irish-English and French all the time until they knelt down and said their prayers together in Latin, to which Arthur diligently closed his Protestant ears.

Early the next morning the family embarked, the carriage having been already put on board ; and the journey became very agreeable as they glided slowly, almost dreamily along, borne chiefly by the cur-

rent, although a couple of horses towed the barge by a rope on the bank, in case of need, in places where the water was more sluggish, but nothing more was wanting in the descent towards the Mediterranean.

The accommodation was not of a high order, but whenever there was a halt near a good inn, Madame de Bourke and the children landed for the night. And in the fine days of early autumn the deck was delightful, and to dine there on the provisions brought on board was a perpetual feast to Estelle and Ulysse.

The weather was beautiful, and there was a constant panorama of fair sights and scenes. Harvest first, a perfectly new spectacle to the children, and then, as they went farther south, the vintage. The

beauty was great as they glided along the pleasant banks of Rhone.

Tiers of vines on the hillsides were mostly cut and trimmed like currant bushes, and disappointed Arthur, who had expected festoons on trellises. But this was the special time for beauty. The whole population, in picturesque costumes, were filling huge baskets with the clusters, and snatches of their merry songs came pealing down to the *coche d'eau*, as it quietly crept along. Towards evening groups were seen with piled baskets on their heads, or borne between them, youths and maidens crowned with vines, half-naked children dancing like little Bacchanalians, which awoke classical recollections in Arthur, and delighted the children

Poor Madame de Bourke was still much depressed, and would sit dreaming half the day, except when roused by some need of her children, some question, or some appeal for her admiration. Otherwise, the lovely heights, surmounted with tall towers, extinguisher-capped, of castle, convent, or church, the clear reaches of river, the beautiful turns, the little villages and towns gleaming white among the trees, seemed to pass unseen before her eyes, and she might be seen to shudder when the children pressed her to say how many days it would be before they saw their father.

An observer with a mind at ease might have been much entertained with the airs and graces that the two maids, Rosette and Babette, lavished upon Laurence, their

only squire ; for Maître Hébert was far too distant and elderly a person for their little coquettices. Rosette dealt in little terrors, and, if he was at hand, durst not step across a plank without his hand, was sure she heard wolves howling in the woods, and that every peasant was '*ce barbare* ;' while Babette, who in conjunction with Maître Hébert acted cook in case of need, plied him with dainty morsels, which he was only too apt to bestow on the beggars, or the lean and hungry lad who attended on the horses. Victorine, on the other hand, by far the prettiest and most sprightly of the three, affected the most supreme indifference to him and his attentions, and hardly deigned to give him a civil word, or to accept the cornflowers and late roses he

brought her from time to time. ‘Mere weeds,’ she said. And the grapes and Queen Claude plums he brought her were always sour. Yet a something deep blue might often be seen peeping above her trim little apron.

Not that Lanty had much time to disport himself in this fashion, for the Abbé was his care, and was perfectly happy with a rod of his arranging, with which to fish over the side. Little Ulysse was of course fired with the same emulation, and dangled his line for an hour together. Estelle would have liked to do the same, but her mother and Mademoiselle Julianne considered the sport not *convenable* for a *demoiselle*. Arthur was once or twice induced to try the Abbé’s rod, but he

found it as mere a toy as that of the boy ; and the mere action of throwing it made his heart so sick with the contrast with the ‘paidling in the burns’ of his childhood, that he had no inclination to continue the attempt, either in the slow canal or the broadening river.

He was still very shy with the Countess, who was not in spirits to set him at ease ; and the Abbé puzzled him, as is often the case when inexperienced strangers encounter unacknowledged deficiency. The perpetual coaxing chatter, and undisguised familiarity of La Jeunesse with the young ecclesiastic did not seem to the somewhat haughty cast of his young Scotch mind quite becoming, and he held aloof ; but with the two children he was

quite at ease, and was in truth their great resource.

He made Ulysse's fishing-rod, baited it, and held the boy when he used it—nay, he once even captured a tiny fish with it, to the ecstatic pity of both children. He played quiet games with them, and told them stories—conversed on *Télémaque* with Estelle, or read to her from his one book, which was *Robinson Crusoe*—a little black copy in pale print, with the margins almost thumbed away, which he had carried in his pocket when he ran away from school, and nearly knew by heart.

Estelle was deeply interested in it, and varied in opinion whether she should prefer Calypso's island or Crusoe's, which she took for as much matter of fact as did, a century

later, Madame Talleyrand, when, out of civility to Mr. Robinson, she inquired after ‘*ce bon Vendredi*.’

She inclined to think she should prefer Friday to the nymphs.

‘A whole quantity of troublesome womenfolk to fash one,’ said Arthur, who had not arrived at the age of gallantry.

‘You would never stay there !’ said Estelle ; ‘you would push us over the rock like Mentor. I think you are our Mentor, for I am sure you tell us a great deal, and you don’t scold.’

‘Mentor was a cross old man,’ said Ulysse.

To which Estelle replied that he was a goddess ; and Arthur very decidedly disclaimed either character, especially the

pushing over rocks. And thus they glided on, spending a night in the great, busy, bewildering city of Lyon, already the centre of silk industry ; but more interesting to the travellers as the shrine of the martyrdoms. All went to pray at the Cathedral except Arthur. The time was not come for heeding church architecture or primitive history ; and he only wandered about the narrow crooked streets, gazing at the toy piles of market produce, and looking at the stalls of merchandise, but as one unable to purchase. His mother had indeed contrived to send him twenty guineas, but he knew that he must husband them well in case of emergencies, and Lady Nithsdale had sewn them all up, except one, in a belt which he wore under his clothes.

He had arrived at the front of the Cathedral when the party came out. Madame de Bourke had been weeping, but looked more peaceful than he had yet seen her, and Estelle was much excited. She had bought a little book, which she insisted on her Mentor's reading with her, though his Protestant feelings recoiled.

‘Ah !’ said Estelle, ‘but you are not Christian.’

‘Yes, truly, Mademoiselle.

‘And these died for the Christian faith. Do you know mamma said it comforted her to pray there ; for she was sure that whatever happened, the good God can make us strong, as He made the young girl who sat in the red-hot chair. We saw her picture,

and it was dreadful. Do read about her, Monsieur Arture.'

They read, and Arthur had candour enough to perceive that this was the simple primitive narrative of the death of martyrs struggling for Christian truth, long ere the days of superstition and division. Estelle's face lighted with enthusiasm.

'Is it not noble to be a martyr?' she asked.

'Oh!' cried Ulysse; 'to sit in a red-hot chair? It would be worse than to be thrown off a rock! But there are no martyrs in these days, sister?' he added, pressing up to Arthur as if for protection.

'There are those who die for the right,' said Arthur, thinking of Lord Derwentwater, who in Jacobite eyes was a martyr.

‘And the good God makes them strong,’ said Estelle, in a low voice. ‘Mamma told me no one could tell how soon we might be tried, and that I was to pray that He would make us as brave as St. Blandina! What do you think could harm us, Monsieur, when we are going to my dear papa?’

It was Lanty who answered, from behind the Abbé, on whose angling endeavours he was attending. ‘Arrah then, nothing at all, Mademoiselle. Nothing in the four corners of the world shall hurt one curl of your blessed little head, while Lanty Callaghan is to the fore.’

‘Ah! but you are not God, Lanty,’ said Estelle gravely; ‘you cannot keep things from happening.’

‘The Powers forbid that I should spake

such blasphemy !' said Lanty, taking off his hat. ' 'Twas not that I meant, but only that poor Lanty would die ten thousand deaths—worse than them as was thrown to the beasts—before one of them should harm the tip of that little finger of yours !'

Perhaps the same vow was in Arthur's heart, though not spoken in such strong terms.

Thus they drifted on till the old city of Avignon rose on the eyes of the travellers, a dark pile of buildings where the massive houses, built round courts, with few external windows, recalled that these had once been the palaces of cardinals, accustomed to the Italian city feuds, which made every house become a fortress.

On the wharf stood a gentleman in a

resplendent uniform of blue and gold, whom the children hailed with cries of joy and outstretched arms, as their uncle. The Marquis de Varennes was soon on board, embracing his sister and her children, and conducting them to one of the great palaces, where he had rooms, being then in garrison. Arthur followed, at a sign from the lady, who presented him to her brother as 'Monsieur Arture'—a young Scottish gentleman who will do my husband the favour of acting as his secretary.

She used the word *gentilhomme*, which conveyed the sense of nobility of blood, and the Marquis acknowledged the introduction with one of those graceful bows that Arthur hated, because they made him doubly feel the stiffness of his own

limitation. He was glad to linger with Lanty, who was looking in wonder at the grim buildings.

‘ And did the Holy Father live here ? ’ said he. ‘ Faith, and ’twas a quare taste he must have had ; I wonder now if there would be vartue in a bit of a stone from his palace. It would mighty please my old mother if there were.’

‘ I thought it was the wrong popes that lived here,’ suggested Arthur.

Lanty looked at him a moment as if in doubt whether to accept a heretic suggestion, but the education received through the Abbé came to mind, and he exclaimed—

‘ May be you are in the right of it, sir ; and I’d best let the stones alone till I can tell which is the true and which is the false.

By the same token, little is the difference it would make to her, unless she knew it ; and if she did, she'd as soon I brought her a hair of the old dragon's bristles.'

Lanty found another day or two's journey bring him very nearly in contact with the old dragon, for at Tarascon was the cave in which St. Martha was said to have demolished the great dragon of Provence, with the sign of the cross. Madame de Bourke and her children made a devout pilgrimage thereto ; but when Arthur found that it was the actual Martha of Bethany to whom the legend was appended, he grew indignant, and would not accompany the party. ' It was a very different thing from the martyrs of Lyon and Vienne ! Their history was credible, but this——'

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way to encounter Berwick. The expense and difficulty of the journey on the mountain roads would likewise be great, and it seemed advisable to avoid these dangers by going by sea. Madame de Bourke eagerly acceded to this plan, her terror of the wild Pyrenean passes and wilder inhabitants had always been such that she was glad to catch at any means of avoiding them, and she had made more than one voyage before.

Estelle was gratified to find they were to go by sea, since Telemachus did so in a Phœnician ship, and, in that odd dreamy way in which children blend fiction and reality, wondered if they should come on Calypso's island ; and Arthur, who had read the *Odyssey*, delighted her and terrified Ulysse with the cave of Polyphemus. M.

de Varennes could only go with his sister as far as Montpelier. Then he took leave of her, and the party proceeded along the shores of the lagoons, in the carriage to the seaport of *Cette*, one of the old Greek towns of the Gulf of Lyon, and with a fine harbour full of ships. Maître Hébert was sent to take a passage on board of one, while his lady and her party repaired to an inn, and waited all the afternoon before he returned with tidings that he could find no French vessel about to sail for Spain, but that there was a Genoese tartane, bound for *Barcelona*, on which Madame la Comtesse could secure a passage for herself and her suite, and which would take her thither in twenty-four hours.

The town was full of troops, waiting a

summons to join Marshal Berwick's army. Several resplendent officers had already paid their respects to Madame l'Ambassadrice, and they concurred in the advice, unless she would prefer waiting for the arrival of one of the French transports which were to take men and provisions to the army in Spain.

This, however, she declined, and only accepted the services of the gentlemen so far as to have her passports renewed, as was needful, since they were to be conveyed by the vessel of an independent power, though always an ally of France.

The tartane was a beautiful object, a one-decked, single-masted vessel, with a long bowsprit, and a huge lateen sail like a wing, and the children fell in love with her at first sight. Estelle was quite sure that

she was just such a ship as Mentor borrowed for Telemachus ; but the poor maids were horribly frightened, and Babette might be heard declaring she had never engaged herself to be at the mercy of the waves, like a bit of lemon peel in a glass of *eau sucrée*.

‘ You may return,’ said Madame de Bourke. ‘ I compel no one to share our dangers and hardships.’

But Babette threw herself on her knees, and declared that nothing should ever separate her from Madame ! She was a good creature, but she could not deny herself the luxury of the sobs and tears that showed to all beholders the extent of her sacrifice.

Madame de Bourke knew that there

would be considerable discomfort in a vessel so little adapted for passengers, and with only one small cabin, which the captain, who spoke French, resigned to her use. It would only, however, be for a short time, and though it was near the end of October, the blue expanse of sea was calm as only the Mediterranean can be, so that she trusted that no harm would result to those who would have to spend the night on deck.

It was a beautiful evening when the little Genoese vessel left the harbour and *Cette* receded in the distance, looking fairer the farther it was left behind. The children were put to bed as soon as they could be persuaded to cease from watching the lights in the harbour, and

the phosphorescent wake of the vessel in the water.

That night and the next day were pleasant and peaceful; there was no rough weather, and little sickness among the travellers. Madame de Bourke congratulated herself on having escaped the horrors of the Pyrenean journey, and the Genoese captain assured her that unless the weather should change rapidly, they would wake in sight of the Spanish coast the next morning. If the sea were not almost too calm, they would be there already. The evening was again so delightful that the children were glad to hear that they would have again to return by sea, and Arthur, who somewhat shrank from his presentation to

the Count, regretted that the end of the voyage was so near, though Ulysse assured him that ‘*Mon papa* would love him, because he could tell such charming stories,’ and Lanty testified that ‘M. le Comte was a mighty friendly gentleman.’

Arthur was lying asleep on deck, wrapped in his cloak, when he was awakened by a commotion among the sailors. He started up and found that it was early morning, the sun rising above the sea, and the sailors all gazing eagerly in that direction. He eagerly made his way to ask if they were in sight of land, recollecting, however, as he made the first step, that Spain lay to the west of them—not to the east.

He distinguished the cry from the Genoese sailors, ‘*Il Moro—Il Moro*,’ in tones of horror and consternation, and almost at the same moment received a shock from Maître Hébert, who came stumbling against him.

‘Pardon, pardon, Monsieur; I go to prepare Madame! It’s the accursed Moors. Let me pass—*miséricorde*, what will become of us?’

Arthur struggled on in search of such of the crew as could speak French, but all were in too much consternation to attend to him, and he could only watch that to which their eyes were directed, a white sail, bright in the morning light, coming up with a rapidity strange and fearful in its precision, like a hawk

pouncing on its prey, for it did not depend on its sails alone, but was propelled by oars.

The next moment Madame de Bourke was on deck, holding by the Abbé's arm, and Estelle, her hair on her shoulders, clinging to her. She looked very pale, but her calmness was in contrast to the Italian sailors, who were throwing themselves with gestures of despair, screaming out vows to the Madonna and saints, and shouting imprecations. The skipper came to speak to her. 'Madame,' he said, 'I implore you to remain in your cabin. After the first, you and all yours will be safe. They cannot harm a French subject; alas! alas! would it were so with us.'

‘How then will it be with you?’ she asked.

He made a gesture of deprecation.

‘For me it will be ruin; for my poor fellows slavery; that is, if we survive the onset. Madame, I entreat of you, take shelter in the cabin, yourself and all yours. None can answer for what the first rush of these fiends may be! *Diavoli! veri diavola!* Ah! for which of my sins is it that after fifty voyages I should be condemned to lose my all?’

A fresh outburst of screams from the crew summoned the captain. ‘They are putting out the long-boat,’ was the cry; ‘they will board us!'

‘Madame! I entreat of you, shut yourself into the cabin.’

And the four maids in various stages of *déshabille*, adding their cries to those of the sailors, tried to drag her in, but she looked about for Arthur. ‘Come with us, Monsieur,’ she said quietly, for after all her previous depressions and alarms, her spirit rose to endurance in the actual stress of danger. ‘Come with us, I entreat of you,’ she said. ‘You are named in our passports, and the treaties are such that neither French nor English subjects can be maltreated nor enslaved by these wretches. As the captain says, the danger is only in the first attack.’

‘I will protect you, Madame, with my life,’ declared Arthur, drawing his sword, as his cheeks and eyes lighted.

‘Ah, put that away. What could you do but lose your own?’ cried the lady. ‘Remember, you have a mother——’

The Genoese captain here turned to insist that Madame and all the women should shut themselves instantly into the cabin. Estelle dragged hard at Arthur’s hand, with entreaties that he would come, but he lifted her down the ladder, and then closed the door on her, Lanty and he being both left outside.

‘To be shut into a hole like a rat in a trap when there’s blows to the fore, is more than flesh could stand,’ said Lanty, who had seized on a handspike and was waving it about his head, true

shillelagh fashion, by hereditary instinct in one who had never beheld a faction fight, in what ought to have been his native land.

The Genoese captain looked at him as a madman, and shouted in a confused mixture of French and Italian to lay down his weapon.

‘*Quei cattivi—ces scelerats* were armed to the teeth—would fire. All lie flat on the deck.’

The gesture spoke for itself. With a fearful howl all the Italians dropped flat; but neither Scotch nor Irish blood brooked to follow their example, or perhaps fully perceived the urgency of the need, till a volley of bullets were whistling about their ears, though happily without injury, the mast and the rigging having protected them, for

the sail was riddled with holes, and the smoke dimmed their vision as the report sounded in their ears. In another second the turbaned, scimitared figures were leaping on board. The Genoese still lay flat offering no resistance, but Lanty and Arthur stood on either side of the ladder, and hurled back the two who first approached; but four or five more rushed upon them, and they would have been instantly cut down, had it not been for a shout from the Genoese, '*Franchi! Franchi!*' At that magic word, which was evidently understood, the pirates only held the two youths tightly, vituperating them no doubt in bad Arabic,—Lanty grinding his teeth with rage, though scarcely feeling the pain of the two sabre cuts he had received, and

pouring forth a volley of exclamations, chiefly, however, directed against the white-livered spalpeens of sailors, who had not lifted so much as a hand to help him. Fortunately no one understood a word he said but Arthur, who had military experience enough to know there was nothing for it but to stand still in the grasp of his captor, a wiry-looking Moor, with a fez and a striped sash round his waist.

The leader, a sturdy Turk in a dirty white turban, with a huge sabre in his hand, was listening to the eager words, poured out with many gesticulations by the Genoese captain, in a language utterly incomprehensible to the Scot, but which was the *lingua Franca* of the Mediterranean ports.

It resulted in four men being placed on guard at the hatchway leading to the cabin, while all the rest, including Arthur, Hébert, Laurence, were driven toward the prow, and made to understand by signs that they must not move on peril of their lives. A Turk was placed at the helm, and the tartane's head turned towards the pirate captor; and all the others, who were not employed otherwise, began to ransack the vessel and feast on the provisions. Some hams were thrown overboard, with shouts of evident scorn as belonging to the unclean beast, but the wine was eagerly drank, and Maître Hébert uttered a wail of dismay as he saw five Moors gorging large pieces of his finest *pâté*.

CHAPTER IV

WRECKED

‘They had na sailed upon the sea
A day but barely three,
When the lift grew dark and the wind blew cauld
And gurly grew the sea.

‘Oh where will I find a little wee boy
Will tak my helm in hand,
Till I gae up to my top mast
And see for some dry land.’

SIR PATRICK SPENS.

IT was bad enough on the deck of the unfortunate Genoese tartane, but far worse below, where eight persons were shut into the stifling atmosphere of the cabin, deprived of the knowledge of what was going on above, except from the terrific sounds

they heard. Estelle, on being shut into the cabin, announced that the Phœnician ship was taken by the vessels of Sesostris, but this did not afford any one else the same satisfaction as she appeared to derive from it. Babette and Rosette were echoing every scream of the crew, and quite certain that all would be massacred, and little Ulysse, wakened by the hubbub, rolled round in his berth and began to cry.

Madame de Bourke, very white, but quite calm, insisted on silence and then said, 'I do not think the danger is very great to ourselves if you will keep silence and not attract attention. But our hope is in Heaven. My brother, will you lead our prayers? Recite our office.' Obediently the Abbé fell on his knees, and

his example was followed by the others. His voice went monotonously on throughout with the Latin. The lady, no doubt, followed in her heart, and she made the responses as did the others, fitfully ; but her hands and eyes were busy, looking to the priming of two small pistols, which she took out of her jewel case, and the sight of which provoked fresh shrieks from the maids. Mademoiselle Julienne meantime was dressing Ulysse, and standing guard over him, Estelle watching all with eager bright eyes, scarcely frightened, but burning to ask questions, from which her uncle's prayers debarred her.

At the volley of shot, Rosette was reduced to quiet by a swoon ; but Victorine, screaming that the wretches would have

killed Laurent, would have rushed on deck, had not her mistress forcibly withheld her. There ensued a prodigious yelling and howling, trampling and scuffling, then the sounds of strange languages in vituperation or command, steps coming down the ladder, sounds of altercation, retreat, splashes in the sea, the feeling that the ship was put about—and ever the trampling, the wild cries of exultation, which over and over again made the prisoners feel choked with the horror of some frightful crisis close at hand. And all the time they were in ignorance, their little window in the stern showed them nothing but sea; and even if Madame de Bourke's determination had not hindered Victorine from peeping out of the cabin, whether prison or fortress, the

Moorish sentries outside kept the door closed.

How long this continued was scarcely to be guessed. It was hours by their own feelings ; Ulysse began to cry from hunger, and his mother gave him and Estelle some cakes that were within reach. Mademoiselle Julienne begged her lady to share the repast, reminding her that she would need all her strength. The Abbé, too, was hungry enough, and some wine and preserved fruits coming to light, all the prisoners made a meal which heartened most of them considerably ; although the heat was becoming terrible, as the sun rose higher in the sky, and very little air could be obtained through the window, so that poor Julienne could not eat, and Rosette

fell into a heavy sleep in the midst of her sighs. Even Estelle, who had got out her *Télémaque*, like a sort of oracle in the course of being verified, was asleep over it, when fresh noises and grating sounds were heard, new steps on deck, and there were steps and voices. The Genoese captain was heard exclaiming, ‘Open, Madame ! you can do so safely. This is the Algerine captain, who is bound to protect you.’

The maids huddled together behind their lady, who stood forward as the door opened to admit a stout, squarely-built man in the typical dress of a Turk—white turban, purple coat, broad sash crammed with weapons, and ample trousers—a truculent-looking figure which made the maids shudder and embrace one another with

suppressed shrieks, but which somehow, even in the midst of his Eastern salaam, gave the Countess a sense that he was acting a comedy, and carried her involuntarily back to the Moors whom she had seen in the *Cid* on the stage. And looking again, she perceived that though brown and weather-beaten, there was a certain Northern ruddiness inherent in his complexion ; that his eyes were gray, so far as they were visible between the surrounding puckers ; and his eyebrows, moustache, and beard not nearly so dark as the hair of the Genoese who stood cringing beside him as interpreter. She formed her own conclusions and adhered to them, though he spoke in bad Arabic to the skipper, who proceeded to explain that El Reis Hamed

would offer no injury to Madame la Comtesse, her suite or property, being bound by treaty between the Dey and the King of France, but that he required to see her passport. There was a little blundering in the Italian's French rendering, and Madame de Bourke was quick to detect the perception of it in the countenance of the Reis, stolid though it was. She felt no doubt that he was a renegade of European birth, and watched, with much anxiety as well as curiosity, his manner of dealing with her passports, which she would not let out of her own hand. She saw in a moment that though he let the Genoese begin to interpret them, his eyes were following intelligently; and she hazarded the observation, 'You understand, sir. You are Frank.'

He turned one startled glance towards the door to see if there were any listeners, and answered, ‘ Hollander, Madame.’

The Countess had travelled with diplomats all her life, and knew a little of the vernacular of most languages, and it was in Dutch—broken indeed, but still Dutch—that she declared that she was sure that she might rely on his protection—a security which in truth she was far from feeling ; for while some of these unfortunate men, renegades only from weakness, yearned after their compatriots and their lost home and faith, others out-heroded the Moors themselves in ferocity, especially towards the Christian captives ; nor was a Dutchman likely to have any special tenderness in his composition, above all towards the French.

However, there was a certain smile on the lips of Reis Hamed, and he answered with a very hearty, ‘Ja ! ja ! Madame. Upon my soul I will let no harm come to you or the pretty little ones, nor the young vrouwkins either, if they will keep close. You are safe by treaty. A Reis would have to pay a heavy reckoning with Mehemed Dey if a French ambassador had to complain of him, and you will bear me witness, Madame, that I have not touched a hair of any of your heads !’

‘I am sure you wish me well, sir,’ said Madame de Bourke in a dignified way, ‘but I require to be certified of the safety of the rest of my suite, my steward, my lackey, and my husband’s secretary, a young gentleman of noble birth.’

‘They are safe, Madame. This Italian

slave can bear me witness that no creature has been harmed since my crew boarded this vessel.'

'I desire then that they may be released, as being named in my passport.'

To this the Dutchman consented.

Whereupon the skipper began to wring his hands, and piteously to beseech Madame to intercede for him, but the Dutchman cut him short before she could speak. 'Dog of an Italian, the lady knows better! You and your fellows are our prize—poor enough after all the trouble you have given us in chasing you.'

Madame de Bourke spoke kindly to the poor man, telling him that though she could do nothing for him now, it was possible that she might when she should have rejoined

her husband, and she then requested the Reis to land her and her suite in his long boat on the Spanish coast, which could be seen in the distance, promising him ample reward if he would do so.

To this he replied : ‘ Madame, you ask what would be death to me.’

He went on to explain that if he landed her on Christian ground, without first presenting her and her passport to the Dey and the French Consul, his men might represent him as acting in the interests of the Christians, and as a traitor to the Algerine power, by taking a bribe from a person belonging to a hostile state, in which case the bowstring would be the utmost mercy he could expect; and the reigning Dey, Mehemed, having been only recently chosen,

it was impossible to guess how he might deal with such cases. Once at Algiers, he assured Madame de Bourke that she would have nothing to fear, as she would be under the protection of the French Consul; and she had no choice but to submit, though much concerned for the continued anxiety to her husband, as well as the long delay and uncertainty of finding him.

Still, when she perceived that it was inevitable, she complained no more, and the Dutchman went on with a certain bluff kindness—as one touched by her courtesy—to offer her the choice of remaining in the tartane or coming on board his larger vessel. The latter he did not recommend, as he had a crew of full two hundred Turks and Moors, and it would be necessary to keep

herself and all her women as closely as possible secluded in the cabins ; and even then, he added, that if once seen he could hardly answer for some of these corsairs not endeavouring to secure a fair young Frank girl for his harem ; and as his eye fell on Rosette, she bridled and hid herself behind Mademoiselle Julianne.

He must, he said, remove all the Genoese, but he would send on board the tartane only seven men on whom he could perfectly depend for respectful behaviour, so that the captives would be able to take the air on deck as freely as before. There was no doubt that he was in earnest, and the lady accepted his offer with thanks, all the stronger since she and all around her were panting and sick for want of fresh air.

It was a great relief when he took her on deck with him that she might identify the three men whom she claimed as belonging to her suite. Arthur, Lanty, and Hébert, who, in their vague knowledge of the circumstances, had been dreading the oar for the rest of their lives, could hardly believe their good fortune when she called them up to her, and the Abbé gripped Lanty's arm as if he would never let him go again. The poor Italians seemed to feel their fate all the harder for the deliverance of these three, and sobbed, howled, and wept so piteously that Arthur wondered how strong men could so give way, while Lanty's tears sprang forth in sympathy, and he uttered assurances and made signs that he would never cease to pray for their rescue.

‘Though,’ as he observed, ‘they were poor creatures that hadn’t the heart of a midge, when there was such a chance of a fight while the haythen spalpeens were coming on board.’

Here Lanty was called on to assist Hébert in identifying his lady’s bales of goods, when all those of the unfortunate Genoese were put on board the corsair’s vessel. A sail-cloth partition was extended across the deck by the care of the Dutchman, ‘who’—as Lanty said—‘for a haythen apostate was a very dacent man.’ He evidently had a strong compassion and fellow-feeling for the Christian lady, and assured her that she might safely take the air and sit on deck as much as she pleased behind its shelter;

and he likewise carefully selected the seven of his crew whom he sent on board to work the ship, the chief being a heavy-looking old Turk, with a chocolate-coloured visage between a huge white beard and eyebrows, and the others mere lads, except one, who, from an indefinable European air about him, was evidently a renegade, and could speak a sort of French, so as to hold communication with the captives, especially Lanty, who was much quicker than any of the rest in picking up languages, perhaps from having from his infancy talked French and English (or rather Irish), and likewise learnt Latin with his foster-brother. This man was the only one permitted to go astern of the partition, in case of need, to

attend to the helm; but the vessel was taken in tow by the corsair, and needed little management. The old Turk seemed to regard the Frankish women like so many basilisks, and avoided turning a glance in their direction, roaring at his crew if he only saw them approaching the sail-cloth, and keeping a close watch upon the lithe black-eyed youths, whose brown limbs carried them up the mast with the agility of monkeys. There was one in especial,—a slight, well-made fellow about twenty, with a white turban cleaner than the rest,—who contrived to cast wonderful glances from the masthead over the barrier at Rosette, who actually smiled in return at *ce pauvre garçon*, and smiled the more for Mademoiselle

Julienne's indignation. Suddenly, however, a shrill shout made him descend hastily, and the old Turk's voice might be heard in its highest key, no doubt shrieking out maledictions on all the ancestry of the son of a dog who durst defile his eyes with gazing at the shameless daughters of the Frank. Little Ulysse was, however, allowed to disport himself wherever he pleased; and after once, under Arthur's protection, going forward, he found himself made very welcome, and offered various curiosities, such as shells, coral, and a curious dried little hippocampus or seahorse.

This he brought back in triumph, to the extreme delight of his sister's classical mind. 'Oh ! mamma, mamma,' she cried,

‘Ulysse really has got the skeleton of a Triton. It is exactly like the stone creatures in the Champs Elysées.’

There was no denying the resemblance, and it so increased the confusion in Estelle’s mind between the actual and the mythological, that Arthur told her that she was looking out for the car of Amphitrite to arise from the waters. Anxiety and trouble had made him much better acquainted with Madame de Bourke, who was grateful to him for his kindness to her children, and not without concern as to whether she should be able to procure his release as well as her own at Algiers. For Laurence Callaghan she had no fears, since he was born at Paris, and a naturalised French subject like

her husband and his brother; but Arthur was undoubtedly a Briton, and unless she could pass him off as one of her suite, it would depend on the temper of the English Consul whether he should be viewed as a subject or as a rebel, or simply left to captivity until his Scottish relations should have the choice of ransoming him.

She took a good deal of pains to explain the circumstances to him as well as to all who could understand them; for though she hoped to keep all together, and to be able to act for them herself, no one could guess how they might be separated, and she could not shake off that foreboding of misfortune which had haunted her from the first.

The kingdom of Algiers was, she told them, tributary to the Turkish Sultan, who kept a guard of Janissaries there, from among whom they themselves elected the Dey. He was supposed to govern by the consent of a divan, but was practically as despotic as any Eastern sovereign; and the Aga of the Janissaries was next in authority to him. Piracy on the Mediterranean was, as all knew, the chief occupation of the Turks and Moors of any spirit or enterprise, a Turk being in authority in each vessel to secure that the Sultan had his share, and that the capture was so conducted as not to involve Turkey in dangerous wars with European powers. Capture by the Moors had for several centuries been

one of the ordinary contingencies of a voyage, and the misfortune that had happened to the party was not at all an unusual one.

In 1687, however, the nuisance had grown to such a height that Admiral Du Quesne bombarded the town of Algiers, and destroyed all the fortifications, peace being only granted on condition that a French Consul should reside at Algiers, and that French ships and subjects should be exempt from this violence of the corsairs.

The like treaties existed with the English, but had been very little heeded by the Algerines till recently, when the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca had provided harbours for British ships, which

exercised a salutary supervision over these Southern sea-kings. The last Dey, Baba Hali, had been a wise and prudent man, anxious to repress outrage, and to be on good terms with the two great European powers; but he had died in the spring of the current year, 1718, and the temper of his successor, Mehemed, had not yet been proved.

Madame de Bourke had some trust in the Dutch Reis, renegade though he was. She had given him her beautiful watch, set with brilliants, and he had taken it with a certain gruff reluctance, declaring that he did not want it,—he was ready enough to serve her without such a toy.

Nevertheless the lady thought it well to impress on each and all, in case of any

separation or further disaster, that their appeal must be to the French Consul, explaining minutely the forms in which it should be made.

‘I cannot tell you,’ she said to Arthur, ‘how great a comfort it is to me to have with me a gentleman, one of intelligence and education to whom I can confide my poor children. I know you will do your utmost to protect them and restore them to their father.’

‘With my very heart’s blood, Madame.’

‘I hope that may not be asked of you, Monsieur,’ she returned with a faint smile,— ‘though I fear there may be much of perplexity and difficulty in the way before again rejoining him. You see where I have placed our passports? My daughter knows

it likewise ; but in case of their being taken from you, or any other accident happening to you, I have written these two letters, which ~~you~~ had better bear about your person. One is, as you see, to our Consul at Algiers, and may serve as credentials ; the other is to my husband, to whom I have already written respecting you.'

‘A thousand thanks, Madame,’ returned Arthur. ‘But I hope and trust we may all reach M. le Comte in safety together. You yourself said that you expected only a brief detention before he could be communicated with, and this captain, renegade though he be, evidently has a respect for you.’

‘That is quite true,’ she returned, ‘and it may only be my foolish heart that forebodes evil ; nevertheless, I cannot

but recollect that *c'est l'imprévu qui arrive.*'

'Then, Madame, that is the very reason there should be no misfortune,' returned Arthur.

It was on the second day after the capture of the tartane that the sun set in a purple angry-looking bank of cloud, and the sea began to heave in a manner which renewed the earlier distresses of the voyage to such as were bad sailors. The sails both of the corsair and of the tartane were taken in, and it was plain that a rough night was to be expected. The children were lashed into their berths, and all prepared themselves to endure. The last time Arthur saw Madame de Bourke's face, by the light of the lamp swinging furiously from the cabin

roof, as he assisted in putting in the dead lights, it bore the same fixed expression of fortitude and resignation as when she was preparing to be boarded by the pirates.

He remained on deck, but it was very perilous, for the vessel was so low in the water that the waves dashed over it so wildly that he could hardly help being swept away. It was pitch dark, too, and the lantern of the other vessel could only just be seen, now high above their heads, now sinking in the trough of the sea, while the little tartane was lifted up as though on a mountain ; and in a kind of giddy dream, he thought of falling headlong upon her deck. Finally he found himself falling. Was he washed overboard ? No ; a sharp blow showed him that he had only fallen

down the hatchway, and after lying still a moment, he heard the voices of Lanty and Hébert, and presently they were all tossed together by another lurch of the ship.

It was a night of miseries that seemed endless, and when a certain amount of light appeared, and Arthur and Lanty crawled upon deck, the tempest was unabated. They found themselves still dashed, as if their vessel were a mere cork, on the huge waves ; rushes of water coming over them, whether from sea or sky there was no knowing, for all seemed blended together in one mass of dark lurid gray ; and where was the Algerine ship—so lately their great enemy, now watched for as their guide and guardian ?

It was no place nor time for questions,

even could they have been heard or understood. It was scarcely possible even to be heard by one another, and it was some time before they convinced themselves that the large vessel had disappeared. The cable must have parted in the night, and they were running with bare poles before the gale; the seamanship of the man at the helm being confined to avoiding the more direct blows of the waves, on the huge crests of which the little tartane rode—gallantly perhaps in mariners' eyes, but very wretchedly to the feelings of the unhappy landsmen within her.

Arthur thought of St. Paul, and remembered with dismay that it was many days before sun or moon appeared. He managed to communicate his recollection to Lanty,

who exclaimed, ‘And he was a holy man, and he was a prisoner too. He will feel for us if any man can in this sore strait ! *Sancte Paule, ora pro nobis.* An’ haven’t I got the blessed scapulary about me neck that will bring me through worse than this ?’

The three managed to get down to tell the unfortunate inmates of the cabin what was the state of things, and to carry them some food, though at the expense of many falls and severe blows; and almost all of them were too faint or nauseated to be able to swallow such food as could survive the transport under such circumstances. Yet high-spirited little Estelle entreated to be carried on deck, to see what a storm was like. She had read of them so often, and

wanted to see as well as to feel. She was almost ready to cry when Arthur assured her it was quite impossible, and her mother added a grave order not to trouble him.

Madame de Bourke looked so exhausted by the continual buffeting and the closeness of the cabin, and her voice was so weak, that Arthur grieved over the impossibility of giving her any air. Julienne tried to make her swallow some *eau de vie*; but the effort of steadyng her hand seemed too much for her, and after a terrible lurch of the ship, which lodged the poor *bonne* in the opposite corner of the cabin, the lady shook her head and gave up the attempt. Indeed, she seemed so worn out that Arthur—little used to the sight of fainting—began to fear that her forebodings of dying

before she could rejoin her husband were on the point of being realised.

However, the gale abated towards evening, and the youth himself was so much worn out that the first respite was spent in sleep. When he awoke, the sea was much calmer, and the eastern sun was rising in glory over it; the Turks, with their prayer carpets in a line, were simultaneously kneeling and bowing in prayer, with their faces turned towards it. Lanty uttered an only too emphatic curse upon the misbelievers, and Arthur vainly tried to make him believe that their 'Allah il Allah' was neither addressed to Mohammed nor the sun.

'Sure and if not, why did they make

their obeisance to it all one as the Persians in the big histhory-book Master Phelim had at school?’

‘It’s to the east they turn, Lanty, not to the sun.’

‘And what right have the haythen spalpeens to turn to the east like good Christians?’

‘Tis to their Prophet’s tomb they look, at Mecca.’

‘There, an’ I tould you they were no better than haythens,’ returned Lanty, ‘to be praying and knocking their heads on the bare boards—that have as much sense as they have—to a dead man’s tomb.’

Arthur’s Scotch mind thought the Moors might have had the best of it

in argument when he recollected Lanty's trust in his scapulary.

They tried to hold a conversation with the Reis, between *lingua Franca* and the Provençal of the renegade ; and they came to the conclusion that no one had the least idea where they were, or where they were going ; the ship's compass had been broken in the boarding, and there was no chart more available than the little map in the beginning of Estelle's precious copy of *Télémaque*. The Turkish Reis did not trouble himself about it, but squatted himself down with his chibouque, abandoning all guidance of the ship, and letting her drift at the will of wind and wave, or, as he said, the will of

Allah. When asked where he thought she was going, he replied with solemn indifference, ‘Kismet;’ and all the survivors of the crew—for one had been washed overboard—seemed to share his resignation.

The only thing he did seem to care for was that if the infidel woman chose to persist in coming on deck, the canvas screen—which had been washed overboard — should be restored. This was done, and Madame de Bourke was assisted to a couch that had been prepared for her with cloaks, where the air revived her a little ; but she listened with a faint smile to the assurances of Arthur, backed by Hébert, that this abandonment to fate gave the best

chance. They might either be picked up by a Christian vessel or go ashore on a Christian coast ; but Madame de Bourke did not build much on these hopes. She knew too well what were the habits of wreckers of all nations, to think that it would make much difference whether they were driven on the coast of Sicily or of Africa—‘ barring,’ as Lanty said, ‘ that they should get Christian burial in the former case.’

‘ We are in the hands of a good God. That at least we know,’ said the Countess. ‘ And He can bear us through, whether for life in Paradise, or trial a little longer here below.’

‘ Like Blandina,’ observed Estelle.

‘ Ah ! my child, who knows whether

trials like even that blessed saint's may not be in reserve even for your tender age. When I think of these miserable men, who have renounced their faith, I see what fearful ordeals there may be for those who fall into the hands of these unbelievers. Strong men have yielded. How may it not be with my poor children ?'

‘God made Blandina brave, mamma. I will pray that He may make me so.’

Land was in sight at last. Purple mountains rose to the south in wild forms, looking strangely thunderous and red in the light of the sinking sun. A bay, with rocks jutting out far into the sea, seemed to embrace them with its arms. Soundings were made, and pre-

sently the Reis decided on anchoring. It was a rocky coast, with cliffs descending into the sea, covered with verdure, and the water beneath was clear as glass.

‘Have we escaped the Syrtes to fall upon *Æneas*’ cave?’ murmured Arthur to himself.

‘And if we could meet Queen Dido, or maybe Venus herself, ’twould be no bad thing!’ observed Lanty, who remembered his Virgil on occasion. ‘For there’s not a drop of wather left barring *eau de vie*, and if these Moors get at that, ’tis raving madmen they would be.’

‘Do they know where we are?’ asked Arthur.

‘Sorrah a bit!’ returned Lanty, ‘tho’ ’tis a pretty place enough. If my old

mother was here, 'tis her heart would warm to the mountains.'

'Is it Calypso's Island?' whispered Ulysse to his sister.

'See, what are they doing?' cried Estelle. 'There are people—don't you see, white specks crowding down to the water.'

There was just then a splash, and two bronzed figures were seen setting forth from the tartane to swim to shore. The Turkish Reis had despatched them to ascertain whether the vessel had drifted, and who the inhabitants might be.

A good while elapsed before one of these scouts returned. There was a great deal of talk and gesticulating round him,

and Lanty, mingling with it, brought back word that the place was the Bay of Golo, not far from Djigheli, and just beyond the Algerine frontier. The people were Cabeleyzes, a wild race of savage dogs, which means dogs according to the Moors, living in the mountains, and independent of the Dey. A considerable number rushed to the coast, armed, and in great numbers, perceiving the tartane to be an Italian vessel, and expecting a raid by Sicilian robbers on their cattle; but the Moors had informed them that it was no such thing, but a prize taken in the name of the Dey of Algiers, in which an illustrious French Bey's harem was being conveyed to Algiers. From that city

the tartane was now about a day's sail, having been driven to the eastward of it during the storm. 'The Turkish commander evidently does not like the neighbourhood,' said Arthur, 'judging by his gestures.'

'Dogs and sons of dogs are the best names he has for them,' rejoined Lanty.

'See! They have cut the cable! Are we not to wait for the other man who swam ashore?'

So it was. A favourable wind was blowing, and the Reis, being by no means certain of the disposition of the Cabeleyzes, chose to leave them behind him as soon as possible, and make his way to Algiers, which began to appear to his unfortunate passengers like a haven of safety.

They were not, however, out of the bay when the wind suddenly veered, and before the great lateen sail could be reefed, it had almost caused the vessel to be blown over. There was a pitching and tossing almost as violent as in the storm, and then wind and current began carrying the tartane towards the rocky shore. The Reis called the men to the oars, but their numbers were too few to be availing, and in a very few minutes more the vessel was driven hopelessly towards a mass of rocks.

Arthur, the Abbé, Hébert, and Lanty were all standing together at the head of the vessel. The poor Abbé seemed dazed, and kept dreamily fingering his rosary, and murmuring to himself. The other three consulted in a low voice.

‘Were it not better to have the women here on deck?’ asked Arthur.

‘*Eh, non!*’ sobbed Master Hébert. ‘Let not my poor mistress see what is coming on her and her little ones! ’

‘Ah! and ’tis better if the innocent creatures must be drowned, that it should be without being insensed of it till they wake in our Lady’s blessed arms,’ added Lanty. ‘Hark! and they are at their prayers.’

But just then Victorine rushed up from below, and throwing her arms round Lanty, cried, ‘Oh! Laurent, Laurent. It is not true that it is all over with us, is it? Oh! save me! save me! ’

‘And if I cannot save you, mine own heart’s core, we’ll die together,’ returned

the poor fellow, holding her fast. ‘It won’t last long, Victorine, and the saints have a hold of my scapulary.’

He had scarcely spoken when, lifted upon a wave, the tartane dashed upon the rocks, and there was at once a horrible shivering and crashing throughout her—a frightful mingling of shrieks and yells of despair with the wild roar of the waves that poured over her. The party at the head of the vessel were conscious of clinging to something, and when the first hurly-burly ceased a little they found themselves all together against the bulwark, the vessel almost on her beam ends, wedged into the rocks, their portion high and dry, but the stern, where the cabin was, entirely under water.

Victorine screamed aloud, 'My lady! my poor lady.'

'I see—I see something,' cried Arthur, who had already thrown off his coat, and in another moment he had brought up Estelle in his arms, alive, sobbing and panting. Giving her over to the steward, he made another dive, but then was lost sight of, and returned no more, nor was anything to be seen of the rest. Shut up in the cabin, Madame de Bourke, Ulysse and the three maids must have been instantly drowned, and none of the crew were to be seen. Maître Hébert held the little girl in his arms, glad that, though living, she was only half-conscious. Victorine, sobbing, hung heavily on Lanty, and before he could free his hands he perceived to his dismay

that the Abbé, unassisted, was climbing down from the wreck upon the rock, scarcely perhaps aware of his danger.

Lanty tried to put Victorine aside, and called out, 'Your reverence, wait—Masther Phelim, wait till I come and help you.' But the girl, frantic with terror, grappled him fast, screaming to him not to let her go—and at the same moment a wave broke over the Abbé. Lanty, almost wild, was ready to leap into it after him, thinking he must be sucked back with it, but behold! he still remained clinging to the rock. Instinct seemed to serve him, for he had stuck his knife into the rock and was holding on by it. There seemed no foothold, and while Lanty was deliberating how to go to his assistance, another wave washed

him off and bore him to the next rock, which was only separated from the mainland by a channel of smoother water. He tried to catch at a floating plank, but in vain ; however, an oar next drifted towards him, and by it he gained the land, but only to be instantly surrounded by a mob of Cabeleyzes, who seemed to be stripping off his garments. By this time many were swimming towards the wreck ; and Estelle, who had recovered breath and senses, looked over Hébert's shoulder at them. 'The savages ! the infidels !' she said. 'Will they kill me ? or will they try to make me renounce my faith ? They shall kill me rather than make me yield.'

'Ah ! yes, my dear demoiselle, that is right. That is the only way. It is my

resolution likewise,' returned Hébert. 'God give us grace to persist.'

'My mamma said so,' repeated the child. 'Is she drowned, Maître Hébert?'

'She is happier than we are, my dear young lady.'

'And my little brother too! Ah! then I shall remember that they are only sending me to them in Paradise.'

By this time the natives were near the wreck, and Estelle, shuddering, clung closer to Hébert; but he had made up his mind what to do. 'I must commit you to these men, Mademoiselle,' he said; 'the water is rising—we shall perish if we remain here.'

'Ah! but it would not hurt so much to be drowned,' said Estelle, who

had made up her mind to Blandina's chair.

‘I must endeavour to save you for your father, Mademoiselle, and your poor grandmother! There! be a good child! Do not struggle.’

He had attracted the attention of some of the swimmers, and he now flung her to them. One caught her by an arm, another by a leg, and she was safely taken to the shore, where at once a shoe and a stocking were taken from her, in token of her becoming a captive; but otherwise her garments were not meddled with; in which she was happier than her uncle, whom she found crouched up on a rock, stripped almost to the skin, so that he shrank from her, when

she sprang to his side amid the Babel of wild men and women, who were shouting in exultation and wonder over his big flapped hat, his *soutane* and bands, pointing at his white limbs and yellow hair—or, what amazed them even more, Estelle's light, flaxen locks, which hung soaked around her. She felt a hand pulling them to see whether anything so strange actually grew on her head, and she turned round to confront them with a little gesture of defiant dignity that evidently awed them, for they kept their hands off her, and did not interfere as she stood sentry over her poor shivering uncle.

Lanty was by this time trying to drag Victorine over the rocks and through

the water. The poor Parisienne was very helpless, falling, hurting herself, and screaming continually; and trebly, when a couple of natives seized upon her, and dragged her ashore, where they immediately snatched away her mantle and cap, pulled off her gold chain and cross, and tore out her earrings with howls of delight.

Lanty, struggling on, was likewise pounced upon, and bereft of his fine green and gold livery coat and waist-coat, which, though by no means his best, and stained with the sea water, were grasped with ecstasy, quarrelled over, and displayed in triumph. The steward had secured a rope by which he likewise reached the shore, only to

become the prey of the savages, who instantly made prize of his watch and purse, as well as of almost all his garments. The five unfortunate survivors would fain have remained huddled together, but the natives pointing to some huts on the hillside, urged them thither by the language of shouts and blows.

‘Faith and I’m not an ox,’ exclaimed Lanty, as if the fellow could have understood him, ‘and is it to the shambles you’re driving me?’

‘Best not resist! There’s nothing for it but to obey them,’ said the steward, ‘and at least there will be shelter for the child.’

No objection was made to his lifting

her in his arms, and he carried her, as the party, half-drowned, nearly starved and exhausted, stumbled on along the rocky paths which cut their feet cruelly, since their shoes had all been taken from them. Lanty gave what help he could to the Abbé and Victorine, who were both in a miserable plight, but ere long he was obliged to take his turn in carrying Estelle, whose weight had become too much for the worn out Hébert. He was alarmed to find, on transferring her, that her head sank on his shoulder as if in a sleep of exhaustion, which, however, shielded her from much terror. For, as they arrived at a cluster of five or six tents, built of clay and the branches of trees, out rushed a host of

women, children, and large fierce dogs, all making as much noise as they were capable of. The dogs flew at the strange white forms, no doubt utterly new to them. Victorine was severely bitten, and Lanty, trying to rescue her, had his leg torn.

These two were driven into one hut; Estelle, who was evidently considered as the greatest prize, was taken into another and rather better one, together with the steward and the Abbé. The Moors, who had swum ashore, had probably told them that she was the Frankish Bey's daughter; for this, miserable place though it was, appeared to be the best hut in the hamlet, nor was she deprived of her clothes. A sort of bournouse or

haik, of coarse texture and very dirty, was given to each of the others, and some rye cakes baked in the ashes. Poor little Estelle turned away her head at first, but Hébert, alarmed at her shivering in her wet clothes, contrived to make her swallow a little, and then took off the soaked dress, and wrapped her in the bournouse. She was by this time almost unconscious from weariness, and made no resistance to the unaccustomed hands, or the disgusting coarseness and uncleanness of her wrapper, but dropped asleep the moment he laid her down, and he applied himself to trying to dry her clothes at a little fire of sticks that had been lighted outside the open space, round which the huts stood.

The Abbé too had fallen asleep, as Hébert managed to assure poor Lanty, who rushed out of the other tent, nearly naked, and bloodstained in many places, but more concerned at his separation from his foster-brother than at anything else that had befallen him. Men, women, children, and dogs were all after him, supposing him to be trying to escape, and he was seized upon and dragged back by main force, but not before the steward had called out—

‘M. l’Abbé sleeps—sleeps sound—he is not hurt! For Heaven’s sake, Laurent, be quiet—do not enrage them! It is the only hope for him, as for Mademoiselle and the rest of us.’

Lanty, on hearing of the Abbé’s

safety, allowed himself to be taken back, making himself, however, a passive dead weight on his captor's hands.

‘Arrah,’ he muttered to himself, ‘if ye will have me, ye shall have the throuble of me, bad luck to you. ’Tis little like ye are to the barbarous people St. Paul was thrown with; but then what right have I to expect the treatment of a holy man, the like of him? If so be, I can save that poor orphan that’s left, and bring off Master Phelim safe, and save poor Victorine from being taken for some dirty spalpeen’s wife, when he has half a dozen more to the fore—’tis little it matters what becomes of Lanty Callaghan; they might give him to their big brutes of dogs,

and mighty lean meat they would find him !'

So came down the first night upon the captives.

CHAPTER V

CAPTIVITY

'Hold fast thy hope and Heaven will not
Forsake thee in thine hour.
Good angels will be near thee,
And evil ones will fear thee,
And Faith will give thee power.'

SOUTHEY.

THE whole northern coast of Africa is inhabited by a medley of tribes, all owning a kind of subjection to the Sultan, but more in the sense of Pope than of King. The part of the coast where the tartane had been driven on the rocks was beneath Mount Araz, a spur of the Atlas, and was in the possession of the Arab tribe called

Cabeleyze, which is said to mean 'the revolted.' The revolt had been from the Algerine power, which had never been able to pursue them into the fastnesses of the mountains, and they remained a wild independent race, following all those Ishmaelite traditions and customs that are innate in the blood of the Arab.

When Estelle awoke from her long sleep of exhaustion, she was conscious of a stifling atmosphere, and moreover of the crow of a cock in her immediate vicinity, then of a dog growling, and a lamb beginning to bleat. She raised herself a little, and beheld, lying on the ground around her, dark heaps with human feet protruding from them. These were interspersed with sheep, goats, dogs,

and fowls, all seen by the yellow light of the rising sun which made its way in not only through the doorless aperture, but through the reeds and branches which formed the walls.

Close as the air was, she felt the chill of the morning and shivered. At the same moment she perceived poor Maître Hébert covering himself as best he could with a dirty brown garment, and bending over her with much solicitude, but making signs to make as little noise as possible, while he whispered, ‘How goes it with Mademoiselle?’

‘Ah,’ said Estelle, recollecting herself, ‘we are shipwrecked. We shall have to confess our faith ! Where are the rest ?’

‘There is M. l’Abbé,’ said Hébert,

pointing to a white pair of the bare feet.

‘Poor Laurent and Victorine have been carried elsewhere.’

‘And mamma? And my brother?’

‘Ah! Mademoiselle, give the good God thanks that He has spared them our trial.’

‘Mamma! Ah, she was in the cabin when the water came in! But my brother! I had hold of his hand, he came out with me. I saw M. Arture swim away with him. Yes, Maître Hébert, indeed I did.’

Hébert had not the least hope that they could be saved, but he would not grieve the child by saying so, and his present object was to get her dressed before any one was awake to watch, and perhaps appropriate her upper garments.

He was a fatherly old man, and she let him help her with her fastenings, and comb out her hair with the tiny comb in her *étui*. Indeed, *friseurs* were the rule in France, and she was not unused to male attendants at the toilette, so that she was not shocked at being left to his care.

For the rest, the child had always dwelt in an imaginary world, a curious compound of the Lives of the Saints and of Télémaque. Martyrs and heroes alike had been shipwrecked, taken captive, and tormented ; and there was a certain sense of realised day-dream about her, as if she had become one of the number and must act up to her part. She asked Hébert if there were a Sainte Estelle, what was the

day of the month, and if she should be placed in the Calendar if she never complained, do what these barbarians might to her. She hoped she should hold out, for she would like to be able to help all whom she loved, poor papa and all. But it was hard that mamma, who was so good, could not be a martyr too ; but she was a saint in Paradise all the same, and thus Estelle made her little prayer in hope. There was no conceit or over-confidence in the tone, though of course the poor child little knew what she was ready to accept ; but it was a spark of the martyr's trust that gleamed in her eye, and gave her a sense of exaltation that took off the sharpest edge of grief and fear.

By this time, however, the animals were stirring, and with them the human beings who had lain down in their clothes. Peace was over ; the Abbé awoke, and began to call for Laurent and his clothes and his beads ; but this aroused the master of the house, who started up, and threatening with a huge stick, roared at him what must have been orders to be quiet.

Estelle indignantly flew between and cried, 'You shall not hurt my uncle.'

The commanding gesture spoke for itself ; and, besides, poor Phelim cowered behind her with an air that caused a word and sign to pass round, which the captives found was equivalent to innocent or imbecile ; and the Mohammedan respect

and tenderness for the demented spared him all further violence or molestation, except that he was lost and miserable without the attentions of his foster-brother; and indeed the shocks he had undergone seemed to have robbed him of much of the small degree of sense he had once possessed.

Coming into the space before the doorway, Estelle found herself the object of universal gaze and astonishment, as her long fair hair gleamed in the sunshine, every one coming to touch it, and even pull it to see if it was real. She was a good deal frightened, but too high-spirited to show it more than she could help, as the dark-skinned, bearded men crowded round with cries of wonder. The other two prison-

ers likewise appeared : Victorine looking wretchedly ill, and hardly able to hold up her head ; Lanty creeping towards the Abbé, and trying to arrange his remnant of clothing. There was a short respite, while the Arabs, all turning eastwards, chanted their morning devotions with a solemnity that struck their captives. The scene was a fine one, if there had been any heart to admire. The huts were placed on the verge of a fine forest of chestnut and cork trees—and beyond towered up mountain peaks in every variety of dazzling colour—red and purple beneath, glowing red and gold where the snowy peaks caught the morning sun, lately broken from behind them. The slopes around were covered with rich grass, flourishing after the summer

heats, and to which the herds were now betaking themselves, excepting such as were detained to be milked by the women, who came pouring out of some of the other huts in dark blue garments ; and in front, still shadowed by the mountain, lay the bay, deep, beautiful, pellucid green near the land, and shut in by fantastic and picturesque rocks—some bare, some clothed with splendid foliage, winter though it was—while beyond lay the exquisite blue stretching to the horizon. Little recked the poor prisoners of the scene so fair ; they only saw the remnant of the wreck below, the sea that parted them from hope, the savage rocks behind, the barbarous people around, the squalor and dirt of the adowara, as the hamlet was called.

Comparatively, the Moor who had swum ashore to reconnoitre seemed like a friend when he came forward and saluted Estelle and the Abbé respectfully. Moreover, the *lingua Franca* Lanty had picked up established a very imperfect double system of interpretation by the help of many gestures. This was Lanty's explanation to the rest: in French, of course, but, like all his speech, Irish-English in construction.

'This Moor, Hassan, wants to stand our friend in his own fashion, but he says they care not the value of an empty mussel-shell for the French, and no more for the Dey of Algiers than I do for the Elector of Hanover. He has told them that M. l'Abbé and Mademoiselle are brother and daughter

to a great Bey—but it is little they care for that. Holy Virgin, they took Mademoiselle for a boy! That is why they are gazing at her so impudently. Would that I could give them a taste of my cane! Do you see those broken walls, and a bit of a castle on yonder headland jutting out into the sea? They are bidding Hassan say that the French built that, and garrisoned it with the help of the Dey; but there fell out a war, and these fellows, or their fathers, surprised it, sacked it, and carried off four hundred prisoners into slavery. Holy Mother defend us! Here are all the rogues coming to see what they will do with us!'

For the open space in front of the huts, whence all the animals had now been

driven, was becoming thronged with figures with the haik laid over their heads, spear or blunderbuss in hand, fine bearing, and sometimes truculent, though handsome, brown countenances. They gazed at the captives, and uttered what sounded like loud hurrahs or shouts ; but after listening to Hassan, Lanty turned round trembling.

‘ The miserables ! Some are for sacrificing us outright on the spot, but this decent man declares that he will make them sensible that their prophet was not out-and-out as bad as that. Never you fear, Mademoiselle.’

‘ I am not afraid,’ said Estelle, drawing up her head. ‘ We shall be martyrs.’

Lanty was engaged in listening to a moan from his foster-brother for food, and

Hébert joined in observing that they might as well be sacrificed as starved to death ; whereupon the Irishman's words and gesticulations induced the Moor to make representations which resulted in some dry pieces of *samh* cake, a few dates, and a gourd of water being brought by one of the women ; a scanty amount for the number, even though poor Victorine was too ill to touch anything but the water ; while the Abbé seemed unable to understand that the servants durst not demand anything better, and devoured her share and a quarter of Lanty's as well as his own. Meantime the Cabeleyzes had all ranged themselves in rows, cross-legged on the ground, opposite to the five unfortunate captives, to sit in judgment on them. As they kept together

in one group, happily in the shade of a hut, Victorine, too faint and sick fully to know what was going on, lay with her head on the lap of her young mistress, who sat with her bright and strangely fearless eyes confronting the wild figures opposite.

Her uncle, frightened, though not comprehending the extent of his danger, crouched behind Lanty, who with Hébert stood somewhat in advance, the would-be guardians of the more helpless ones.

There was an immense amount of deafening shrieking and gesticulating among the Arabs. Hassan was responding, and finally turned to Lanty, when the anxious watchers could perceive signs as if of paying down coin made interrogatively. ‘Promise them anything, everything,’ cried Hébert;

‘M. le Comte would give his last sou—so would Madame la Marquise — to save Mademoiselle.’

‘I have told him so,’ said Laurence presently ; ‘I bade him let them know it is little they can make of us, specially now they have stripped us as bare as themselves, the rascals ! but that their fortunes would be made—and little they would know what to do with them—if they would only send M. l’Abbé and Mademoiselle to Algiers safe and sound. There ! he is trying to incense them. Never fear, Master Phelim, dear, there never was a rogue yet, black or white, or the colour of poor Madame’s frothed chocolate, who did not love gold better than blood, unless indeed ’twas for the sweet morsel of revenge ; and these,

for all their rolling eyes and screeching tongues, have not the ghost of a quarrel with us.'

'My beads, my breviary,' sighed the Abbé. 'Get them for me, Lanty.'

'I wish they would end it quickly,' said Estelle. 'My head aches so, and I want to be with mamma. Poor Victorine! yours is worse,' she added, and soaked her hand-kerchief in the few drops of water left in the gourd to lay it on the maid's forehead.

The howling and shrieking betokened consultation, but was suddenly interrupted by some half-grown lads, who came running in with their hands full of what Lanty recognised to his horror as garments worn by his mistress and fellow-servants, also a big kettle and a handspike. They pointed

down to the sea, and with yells of haste and exultation all the wild conclave started up to snatch, handle, and examine, then began rushing headlong to the beach. Hassan's explanations were scarcely needed to show that they were about to ransack the ship, and he evidently took credit to himself for having induced them to spare the prisoners in case their assistance should be requisite to gain full possession of the plunder.

Estelle and Victorine were committed to the charge of a forbidding-looking old hag, the mother of the sheyk of the party ; the Abbé was allowed to stray about as he pleased, but the two men were driven to the shore by the eloquence of the club. Victorine revived enough for a burst of

tears and a sobbing cry, ‘Oh, they will be killed ! We shall never see them again !’

‘No,’ said Estelle, with her quiet yet childlike resolution, ‘they are not going to kill any of us yet. They said so. You are so tired, poor Victorine ! Now all the hubbub is over, suppose you lie still and sleep. My uncle,’ as he roamed round her, mourning for his rosary, ‘I am afraid your beads are lost ; but see here, these little round seeds, I can pierce them if you will gather some more for me, and make you another set. See, these will be the Aves, and here are shells in the grass for the Paters.’

The long fibre of grass served for the string, and the sight of the Giaour girl’s employment brought round her all the

female population who had not repaired to the coast. Her first rosary was torn from her to adorn an almost naked baby; but the Abbé began to whimper, and to her surprise the mother restored it to him. She then made signs that she would construct another necklace for the child, and she was rewarded by a gourd being brought to her full of milk, which she was able to share with her two companions, and which did something to revive poor Victorine. Estelle was kept threading these necklaces and bracelets all the wakeful hours of the day—for every one fell asleep about noon—though still so jealous a watch was kept on her that she was hardly allowed to shift her position so as to get out of the sun, which even at that season was

distressingly scorching in the middle of the day.

Parties were continually coming up from the beach laden with spoils of all kinds from the wreck, Lanty, Hébert, and a couple of negroes being driven up repeatedly, so heavily burthened as to be almost bent double. All was thrown down in a heap at the other end of the adowara, and the old sheyk kept guard over it, allowing no one to touch it. This went on till darkness was coming on, when, while the cattle were being collected for the night, the prisoners were allowed an interval, in which Hébert and Lanty told how the natives, swimming like ducks, had torn everything out of the wreck: all the bales and boxes, that poor Maître Hébert had

secured with so much care, and many of which he was now forced himself to open for the pleasure of these barbarians.

That, however, was not the worst. Hébert concealed from his little lady what Lanty did not spare Victorine. ‘ And there—enough to melt the heart of a stone—there lay on the beach poor Madame la Comtesse, and all the three. Good was it for you, Victorine, my jewel, that you were not in the cabin with them.’

‘ I know not,’ said the dejected Victorine; ‘ they are better off than we ? ’

‘ You would not say so, if you had seen what I have,’ said Lanty, shuddering. ‘ The dogs !—they cut off Madame’s poor white fingers to get at her rings, and not with knives either, lest her blessed flesh

should defile them, they said, and her poor face was an angel's all the time. Nay, nor that was not the worst. The villainous boys, what must they do but pelt the poor swollen bodies with stones ! Ay, well you may scream, Victorine. We went down on our knees, Maître Hébert and I, to pray they might let us give them burial, but they mocked us, and bade Hassan say they never bury dogs. I went round the steeper path, for all the load at my back, or I should have been flying at the throats of the cowardly vultures, and then what would have become of M. l'Abbé ?'

Victorine trembled and wept bitterly for her companions, and then asked if Lanty had seen the corpse of the little Chevalier.

‘Not a sight of him or M. Arthur either,’

returned Lanty ; ‘only the ugly face of the old Turk captain and another of his crew, and them they buried decently, being Moslem hounds like themselves ; while my poor lady that is a saint in heaven——’ and he, too, shed tears of hot grief and indignation, recovering enough to warn Victorine by no means to let the poor young girl know of this additional horror.

There was little opportunity, for they had been appropriated by different masters : Estelle, the Abbé, and Hébert to the sheyk, or headman of the clan ; and Lanty and Victorine to a big, strong, fierce-looking fellow, of inferior degree but greater might.

This time Estelle was to be kept for the night among the sheyk’s women, who, though too unsophisticated to veil

their faces, had a part of the hut closed off with a screen of reeds, but quite as bare as the outside. Hébert, who could not endure to think of her sleeping on the ground, and saw a large heap of grass or straw provided for a little brown cow, endeavoured to take an armful for her. Unluckily it belonged to Lanty's master, Eyoub, who instantly flew at him in a fury, dragged him to a log of wood, caught up an axe, and had not Estelle's screams brought up the sheyk, with Hassan and one or two other men, the poor Maître d'Hôtel's head would have been off. There was a sharp altercation between the sheyk and Eyoub, while Estelle held the faithful servant's hand,

saying, ‘ You did it for me ! Oh, Hébert, do not make them angry again. It would be beautiful to die for one’s faith, but not for a handful of hay.’

‘ Ah ! my dear *demoiselle*, what would my poor ladies say to see you sleeping on the bare ground in a filthy hut ? ’

‘ I slept well last night,’ returned Estelle ; ‘ indeed, I do not mind ! It is only the more like the dungeon at Lyon, you know ! And I pray you, Hébert, do not get yourself killed for nothing too soon, or else we shall not all stand out and confess together, like St. Blandina and St. Ponticus and St. Epagathius.’

‘ Alas, the dear child ! The long

names run off her tongue as glibly as ever,' sighed Hébert, who, though determined not to forsake his faith, by no means partook her enthusiasm for martyrdom. Hassan, however, having explained what the purpose had been, Hébert was pardoned, though the sheyk scornfully observed that what was good enough for the daughters of a Hadji was good enough for the unclean child of the Frankish infidels.

The hay might perhaps have spared a little stiffness, but it would not have ameliorated the chief annoyances — the closeness, the dirt, and the vermin. It was well that it was winter, or the first of these would have been far worse, and, fortunately for Estelle, she was

one of those whom suffocating air rather lulls than rouses.

Eyoub's hovel did not rejoice in the refinement of a partition, but his family, together with their animals, lay on the rocky floor as best they might; and Victorine's fever came on again, so that she lay in great misery, greeted by a growl from a great white dog whenever she tried to relieve her restless aching limbs by the slightest movement, or to reach one of the gourds of water laid near the sleepers, like Saul's cruse at his pillow.

Towards morning, however, Lanty, who had been sitting with his back against the wall, awoke from the sleep well earned by acting as a beast of

burthen. The dog growled a little, but Lanty—though his leg still showed its teeth-marks—had made friends with it, and his hand on its head quieted it directly, so that he was able cautiously to hand a gourd to Victorine. The Arabs were heavy sleepers, and the two were able to talk under their breath; as, in reply to a kind word from Lanty, poor Victorine moaned her envy of the fate of Rosette and Babette; and he, with something of their little mistress's spirit, declared that he had no doubt but that 'one way or the other they should be out of it: either get safe home, or be blessed martyrs, without even a taste of purgatory.'

'Ah! but there's worse for me,'

sighed Victorine. ‘This demon brought another to stare in my face—I know he wants to make me his wife! Kill me first, Laurent.’

‘It is I that would rather espouse you, my jewel,’ returned a tender whisper.

‘How can you talk of such things at such a moment?’

‘ ’Tis a pity M. l’Abbé is not a priest,’ sighed Lanty. ‘But, you know, Victorine, who is the boy you always meant to take.’

‘You need not be so sure of that,’ she said, the coy coquetry not quite extinct.

‘Come, as you said, it is no time for fooling. Give me your word and

troth to be my wife so soon as we have the good luck to come by a Christian priest by our Lady's help, and I'll outface them all—were it Mohammed the Prophet himself, that you are my espoused and betrothed, and woe to him that puts a finger on you.'

‘ You would only get yourself killed.’

‘ And would not I be proud to be killed for your sake ? Besides, I'll show them cause not to kill me if I have the chance. Trust me, Victorine, my darling — it is but a chance among these murdering villains, but it is the only one ; and, sure, if you pretended to turn the back of your hand to me when there were plenty of Christian men to compliment you, yet you would

rather have poor Lanty than a thundering rogue of a pagan Mohammedan.'

'I hope I shall die,' sighed poor Victorine faintly. 'It will only be your death!'

'That is my affair,' responded Lanty. 'Come, here's daylight coming in; reach me your hand before this *canaille* wakes, and here's this good beast of a dog, and yonder grave old goat with a face like Père Michel's for our witnesses—and by good luck, here's a bit of gilt wire off my shoulder-knot that I've made into a couple of rings while I've been speaking.'

The strange betrothal had barely taken place before there was a stir, and what was no doubt a yelling imprecation on the 'dog Giaours' for the noise they made.

The morning began as before, with the exception that Estelle had established a certain understanding with a little chocolate-coloured cupid of a boy of the size of her brother, and his lesser sister, by letting them stroke her hair, and showing them the mysteries of cat's cradle. They shared their gourd of goat's-milk with her, but would not let her give any to her companions. However, the Abbé had only to hold out his hand to be fed, and the others were far too anxious to care much about their food.

A much larger number of Cabeleyzes came streaming into the forum of the adowara, and the prisoners were all again placed in a row, while the new-comers

passed before them, staring hard, and manifestly making personal remarks which perhaps it was well that they did not understand. The sheyk and Eyoub evidently regarded them as private property, stood in front, and permitted nobody to handle them, which was so far a comfort.

Then followed a sort of council, with much gesticulation, in which Hassan took his share. Then, followed by the sheyk, Eyoub, and some other headmen, he advanced, and demanded that the captives should become true believers. This was eked out with gestures betokening that thus they would be free, in that case; while, if they refused, the sword and the smouldering flame were pointed to, while the whole host loudly shouted 'Islam!'

Victorine trembled, sobbed, tried to hide herself; but Estelle stood up, her young face lighted up, her dark eyes gleaming, as if she were realising a day-dream, as she shook her head, cried out to Lanty, 'Tell him, No, never!' and held to her breast a little cross of sticks that she had been forming to complete her uncle's rosary. Her gesture was understood. A man better clad than the rest, with a turban and a broad crimson sash, rushed up to her, seized her by the hair, and waved his scimitar over her head. The child felt herself close to her mother. She looked up in his face with radiant eyes and a smile on her lips. It absolutely daunted the fellow: his arm dropped, and he gazed

at her like some supernatural creature; and the sheyk, enraged at the interference with his property, darted forth to defend it, and there was a general wrangling.

Seconded by their interpreter, Hassan, who knew that the Koran did not prescribe the destruction of Christians, Hébert and Lanty endeavoured to show that their conversion was out of the question, and that their slaughter would only be the loss of an exceedingly valuable ransom, which would be paid if they were handed over safe and sound and in good condition.

There was no knowing what was the effect of this, for the council again ended in a rush to secure the remaining pillage

of the wreck. Hébert and Lanty dreaded what they might see, but to their great relief those poor remains had disappeared. They shuddered as they remembered the hyenas' laughs and the jackals' howls they had heard at nightfall; but though they hoped that the sea had been merciful, they could even have been grateful to the animals that had spared them the sight of conscious insults.

The wreck was finally cleared, and among the fragments were found several portions of books. These the Arabs disregarded, being too ignorant even to read their own Koran, and yet aware of the Mohammedan scruple which forbids the destruction of any scrap of paper lest it should bear the name of Allah. Lanty

secured the greater part of the Abbé's breviary, and a good many pages of Estelle's beloved *Télémaque*; while the steward gained possession of his writing case, and was permitted to retain it when the Cabeleyzes, glutted with plunder, had ascertained that it contained nothing of value to them.

After everything had been dragged up to the adowara, there ensued a sort of auction or division of the plunder. Poor Maître Hébert was doomed to see the boxes and bales he had so diligently watched broken open by these barbarians,—nay, he had to assist in their own dissection when the secrets were too much for the Arabs. There was the King of Spain's portrait rent from its costly

setting and stamped upon as an idolatrous image. The miniature of the Count, worn by the poor lady, had previously shared the same fate, but that happily was out of sight and knowledge. Here was the splendid plate, presented by crowned heads, howled over by savages ignorant of its use. The silver they seemed to value; but there were three precious gold cups which the salt water had discoloured, so that they were taken for copper and sold for a very small price to a Jew, who somehow was attracted to the scene, 'like a raven to the slaughter,' said Lanty.

This man likewise secured some of the poor lady's store of rich dresses, but a good many more were appropriated to

make sashes for the men, and the smaller articles, including stockings, were wound turban fashion round the children's heads.

Lanty could not help observing, 'And if the saints are merciful to us, and get us out of this, we shall have stories to tell that will last our lives!' as he watched the solemn old chief smelling to the perfumes, swallowing the rouge as splendid medicine, and finally fingering a snuff-box, while half a dozen more crowded round to assist in the opening, and in another moment sneezing, weeping, tingling, dancing frantically about, vituperating the Christian's magic.

This gave Lanty an idea. A little round box lay near, which, as he remembered, contained a Jack-in-the-box, or

Polichinelle, which the poor little Chevalier had bought at the fair at Tarascon. This he contrived to secrete and hand to Victorine. ‘Keep the secret,’ he said, ‘and you will find your best guardian in that bit of a box.’ And when that very evening an Arab showed some intentions of adding her to his harem, Victorine bethought herself of the box, and unhooked in desperation. Up sprang Punch, long-nosed and fur-capped, right in the bearded face.

Back the man almost fell: ‘Shaitan, Shaitan !’ was the cry, as the inhabitants tumbled pell-mell out of the hovel, and Victorine and Punch remained masters of the situation.

She heard Lanty haranguing in broken

Arabic and *lingua Franca*, and presently he came in, shaking with suppressed laughter. ‘If ever we get home,’ said he, ‘we’ll make a pilgrimage to Tarascon! Blessings on good St. Martha that put that sweet little imp in my way! The rogues think he is the very genie that the fisherman let out of the bottle in Mademoiselle’s book of the Thousand and One Nights, and thought to see him towering over the whole place. And a fine figure he would be with his hook nose and long beard. They sent me to beg you fairly to put up your little Shaitan again. I told them that Shaitan, as they call him, is always in it when there’s meddling between an espoused pair—which is as true as though the

Holy Father at Rome had said it—and as long as they were civil, Shaitan would rest; but if they durst molest you, there was no saying where he would be, if once you had to let him out! To think of the virtue of that ugly face and bit of a coil of wire !'

Meantime Hébert, having ascertained that both the Jew and Hassan were going away, the one to Constantina, the other to Algiers, wrote, and so did Estelle, to the Consul at Algiers, explaining their position and entreating to be ransomed. Though only nine years old, Estelle could write a very fair letter, and the amazement of the Arabs was unbounded that any female creature should wield a pen. Marabouts and merchants were known to read the

Koran, but if one of the goats had begun to write, their wonder could hardly have been greater; and such crowds came to witness the extraordinary operation that she could scarcely breathe or see.

It seemed to establish her in their estimation as a sort of supernatural being, for she was always treated with more consideration than the rest of the captives, never deprived of the clothes she wore, and allowed to appropriate a few of the toilette necessaries that were quite incomprehensible to those around her.

She learnt the names for bread, chestnuts, dates, milk, and water, and these were never denied to her; and her little ingenuities in nursery games won the goodwill of the women and children around her, though

others used to come and make ugly faces at her, and cry out at her as an unclean thing. The Abbé was allowed to wander about at will, and keep his Hours, with Estelle to make the responses, and sometimes Hébert. He was the only one that might visit the other two captives ; Lanty was kept hard at work over the crop of chestnuts that the clan had come down from their mountains to gather in ; and poor Victorine, who was consumed by a low fever, and almost too weak to move, lay all day in the dreary and dirty hut, expecting, but dreading death.

Some days later there was great excitement, shouting, and rage. It proved that the Bey of Constantina had sent to demand the party, threatening to send an armed

force to compel their surrender ; but, alas ! the hope of a return to comparative civilisation was instantly quashed, for the sheyk showed himself furious. He and Eyoub stood brandishing their scimitars, and with eyes flashing like a panther's in the dark, declaring that they were free, no subjects of the Dey nor the Bey either ; and that they would shed the blood of every one of the captives rather than yield them to the dogs and sons of dogs at Constantina.

This embassy only increased the jealousy with which the prisoners were guarded. None of them were allowed to stir without a man with a halbert, and they had the greatest difficulty in entrusting a third letter to the Moor in command of the party. Indeed, it was only managed

by Estelle's coaxing of the little Abou Daoud, who was growing devoted to her, and would do anything for the reward of hearing her sing *Malbrook s'en va-t'-en guerre*.

It might have been in consequence of this threat of the Bey, much as they affected to despise it, that the Cabeleyzes prepared to return to the heights of Mount Araz, whence they had only descended during the autumn to find fresh pasture for their cattle, and to collect dates and chestnuts from the forest.

‘Alas !’ said Hébert, ‘this is worse than ever. As long as we were near the sea, I had hope, but now all trace of us will be lost, even if the Consul should send after us.’

‘Never fear, Maître Hébert,’ said Estelle; ‘you know Télémaque was a prisoner and tamed the wild peasants in Egypt.’

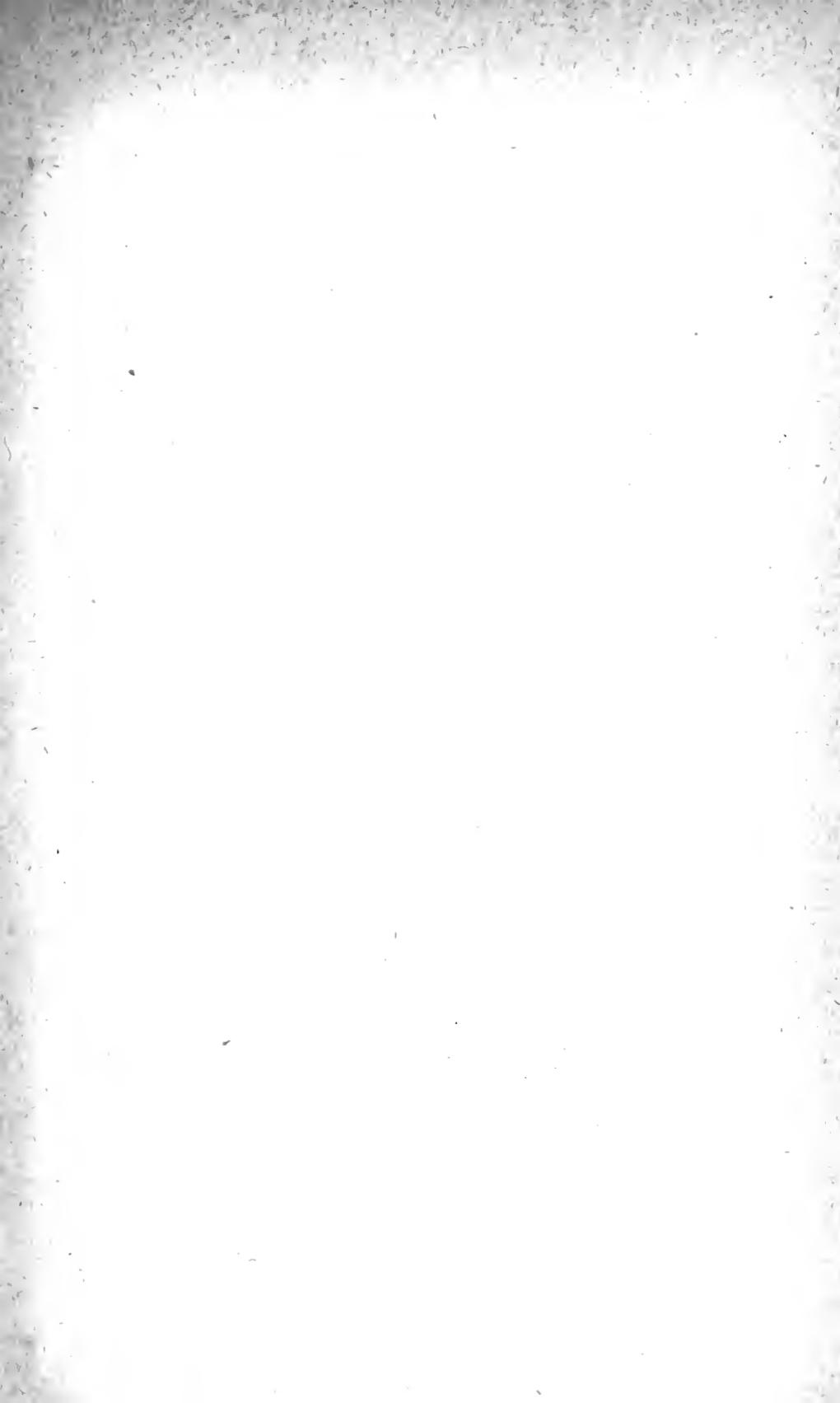
‘Ah! the poor *demoiselle*, she always seems as if she were acting a comedy.’

This was happily true. Estelle seemed to be in a curious manner borne through the dangers and discomforts of her surroundings by a strange dreamy sense of living up to her part, sometimes as a possible martyr, sometimes as a figure in the mythological or Arcadian romance that had filtered into her nursery.

END OF VOL. I.



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